

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

Julie LoTempio

Minister of Music

Tim Smith

Financial Secretary

Doris Schanzlin

Custodian

TBD

350 Saratoga Road, Amherst, NY 14226

Phone: (716) 839-2460

www.christchurchamherst.org E-mail: cumc350@gmail.com

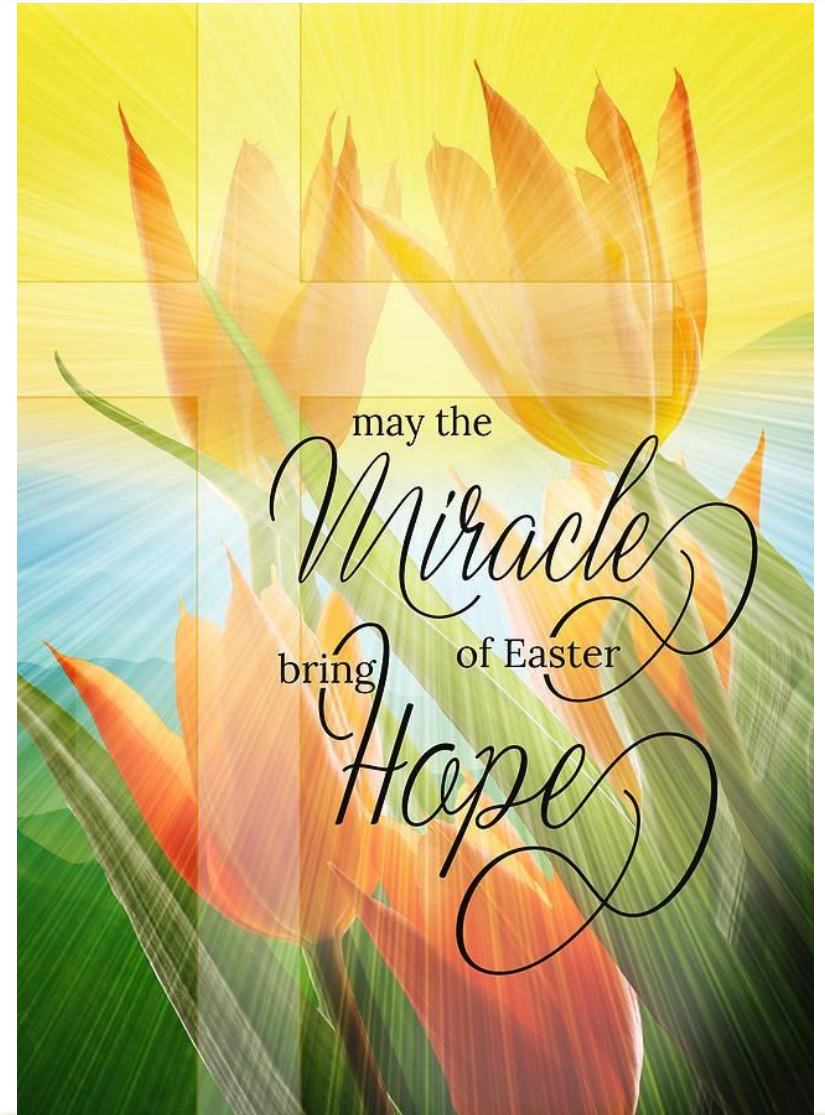
CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday 9am-1pm

Office closed Monday, April 21, and Monday, May 26



The Caller



April/May 2025

June, July, August 2025
Caller Deadline:
Tuesday, May 13
to
bbmitch@verizon.net
Questions?
Contact Barb Mitchell
(716) 839-2435 or bbmitch@verizon.net



In the ritual of baptism which we were reminded of recently through the baptism of Aubrey Loliger, parents are asked at one point, “Will you nurture this child in Christ’s holy Church, that *by your teaching and example* they may be guided to accept God’s grace for

themselves . . .” In other words, would our children through what we say and do be able to see and know God? Jesus says in John 13:34, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another.” To explore that question of the baptismal ritual another way, do our lives through what we say and do express and share the same love that Jesus had for us through what he said and did? If you are anything like me, you answer with a “Heaven’s no! My life as an expression of God’s love still needs a lot of work.” Thankfully John Wesley certainly understood this reality seeing perfection, that is our lives being a perfect reflection of the love of God, as virtually unobtainable in this life. Rather our lives are spent growing in holiness of heart and life ever closer to that reflection, a process called sanctification. So, the pledge of my life in its teaching and example is more truly a commitment to this process—recognizing that I have a long way to go, but will do all I can to reach it.

While we are reminded of the gift of the Holy Spirit, we are left with the challenge—will everyone know that we are Christ’s disciples because of our love for one another? Can our children see God in us and through us? Do we as parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends, and neighbors reflect through our teaching and example the love of God? Let us gather and grow committing ourselves to the process that the answer may become ever more clearly a resounding ‘yes’ and ‘amen’ as we live our vision of “Making Connections and Offering Opportunities in faith, love, and service.’

*Yours in Christ,
Pastor Daven*

April Birthdays

Kathy Weaver	5 *
Al Tolsma	13
Daven Oskvig	15
Drew Smith	21
David Lawson	22
Pamela Gibson	23
Doris Schanzliln	26
Benjamin Weaver	30



May Birthdays

Roger Johnson	2
Mary Ball	13
Herb Darling	13
Jordan Lawson	14
Kristen Darling	18
Rebecca Lopez	21
Ryan Lopez	21
Scott Smith	21
Sally Pollard	22
Ed Gilbert	23
Pastor Theva	24
Christopher Maliken	27
Richard Radel	30
Alexander Juergens	31



Music
and
Meditation

April Anniversaries

Brad & Mary Loliger	April 07, 2018
Bob & Anna Lovell	April 29, 2006



May Anniversaries

Greg & Lynn Ramsey	May 04, 1984
Roger & Dede Johnson	May 10, 1986
John & Pam Lopez	May 21, 1994
John & Diane Glenn	May 27, 1998

We wish to extend our sympathy and prayers to the family and fiends of David Brown upon his death on March 19, 2025



Handful of Hobby-ers meet Thursdays at 6:30p during Lent.
Join us April 3rd and 10th for the last 2 get-togethers!



Christ Church Free Little Food Pantry



Our Little Food Pantry is doing its job and needs your continued help in continuing to offer sustenance and hope to our neighbors. Please consider adding an extra item to your grocery list and bring it to church with you each week. The current needs are:

- Canned Fruit
- Canned Soup
- Oatmeal Canisters
- Toothpaste
- Pasta/Pasta Sauce— no Mac & Cheese please.
- Canned Veggies
- Peanut Butter
- Juices
- Toilet Paper/Paper Products



Current needs are:

- Crackers
- Side dishes
- Drop them in Office hallway bins
- Granola bars
- Tomato based products



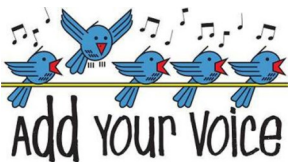
Hearts for the Homeless Mobile Food Pantry

Hearts for the Homeless Mobile Food Pantry needs your help. Please prayerfully consider helping for an hour or more on a Monday afternoon between the hours of 12:30 pm and 4:30 pm when the mobile food pantry is parked in front of Christ Church. Volunteers welcome and encourage shoppers and assist them in selecting and bagging groceries. If you can help with this ministry, please see Toni Neidel.



Calling all Singers!!

Choir is inviting all who enjoy singing to join us for Easter Sunday service. If interested, please come to choir rehearsals on Wednesday night, 6p-7:15p on April 2, 9, and 16. Let us “raise a joyful noise unto the Lord!”



Lenten Season

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.



Maundy Thursday / Tenebrae Explained:

This evening service commemorates the supper Jesus shared with his disciples before his crucifixion, when Jesus washed the disciples’ feet and instituted the Lord’s Supper. Particular traditional actions are part of this night including: confession and pardon, proclamation of the Word, foot washing, the Lord’s Supper, and the stripping of the church. The title of this day, Maundy Thursday, recalls the new commandment (mandatum novum in Latin) in John 13:34. The ancient practice of stripping the Lord’s table and sanctuary following communion is a vivid and dramatic way of showing the desolation and abandonment of the long night in Gethsemane and what followed. Tenebrae, or “darkness,” is based on a twelfth-century late night/early morning service and is an extended meditation of the passion of Christ. Gradually the worship space grows darker alongside the extinguishing of candles representing the apostles abandoning Christ, with the final reading done in near complete darkness to reflect the shadows of sin / evil in the world. A single candle returns to the space as a symbol of Christ, representing the light of hope amidst darkness. We will gather for a Maundy Thursday Worship of Holy Communion and Tenebrae@ 7 PM on April 17, 2025



Good Friday

Good Friday will continue the offerings of Music & Meditation for 30 minutes beginning at 5:30 PM with the readings aligning with the focus of Good Friday on the way of the cross **with the candlelit contemplative setting ideal for this introspective holy time.**

Walking the Labyrinth at Daemen University

A labyrinth has a long history with Christian tradition. Different from a maze, a labyrinth has only one path and no dead ends. As far back as the 4th-century, they have been present on church walls and floors. Part of their usage relates to providing an alternative to pilgrimage to the Holy Land. The hope is that through the walk pilgrims would shed everything on their mind; all of their worries, fear, and concerns. Upon reaching the center, one is still and waits for illumination or healing or a sense of God's presence. Then, walking the winding way out, one feels at one with God, self, others, and nature.

The path winds throughout becoming a mirror for where we are in our lives, touching our sorrows and releasing our joys. One approaches with an open mind and an open heart. There are three stages in the walking - purgation (releasing); illumination (receiving); union (returning). First, purgation is the act of shedding thoughts and distraction enabling one to let go of the details of life. It is a time to open the heart and mind. Second, illumination at the center seeks guidance. Finally, union follows the same path out with strength and clarity to find and do the work to which God has called one. All are encouraged to walk the outdoor labyrinth in front of Curtis Hall on the campus of Daemen University (Main St. & Getzville.)

The End of Lent:

Certain years by the nature of the calendar yield unique challenges to the faithful. With the celebration of the resurrection happening so late, we spend the majority of the month of April in the season of Lent. As our natural world undergoes its own rebirth, we are to hold ourselves in the season of Lent. Yet it is imperative that we do exactly that, remain in Lent especially through Holy Week. This time (the scriptures, the worship, and the spiritual disciplines) is a door opened to us annually so we may experience fully the splendor of Christ's Kingdom, have the foretaste of the eternal joy which awaits us, and the glory of the victory which is already and fills the whole of creation. This is the time when we approach and will finally, once again, pass into new life with Christ. But we cannot pass through this door without journeying completely through Lent. The purpose of spiritual disciplines through Lent, of fasting from something, is to remind us in our deprived/hungry state that we rely upon something else. We ask what this 'something' through the corresponding question of 'on what does our life depend?' As we hunger, we experience Christ and are liberated from dependence on food, matter, and the world. We are then left with only a hunger for God. Only God has life and is Life.

75th Anniversary Celebration of CUMC



2024 represented the 75th year of ministry of Christ Church. The Church was founded in March of 1949 with the first worship service held on September 11, 1949. We began conversations on how to mark this milestone last year concluding that our focus wanted not to be on the past of Christ Church, but the present and future. With that in mind, the Leadership of Christ Church decided that our efforts should be in a worship service to praise God for this rich and amazing 75 year history, while looking toward the future God has in store for this incredible community on the corner of Harlem & Saratoga. We are asking everyone to mark your calendars and spread the word of this celebration to be held on May 18, 2025. We are hoping to gather everyone we can who has connections to Christ Church (baptized, married, confirmed, past & present members, past & present leaders and staff, friends, neighbors, partners in ministry, etc.) to join in worship that morning and a time of fellowship following. We are seeking a couple of people willing to help with the planning, set up displays from the archives, and assist with sharing the story of these 75 years. If you are interested, please talk with Pastor Daven.

Pride Parade

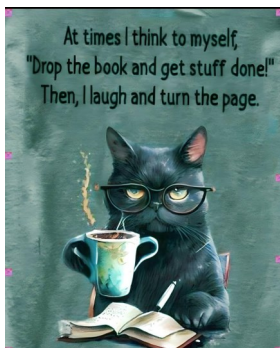


In March of 2022 through a unanimous congregational vote, we became part of the Reconciling Ministries Network, a national group that celebrates that LGBTQ+ persons are an expression of God's diverse creation and exists to advocate for the affirmation of all of God's children in the Church and World. As we ambitiously seek to continue to grow and live into that, some ways have included the expression of that commitment and openness at the beginning of every worship service and the use of inclusive language in projected and printed materials. This year, looking for new ways to expand and enhance this commitment and partnership particularly in light of initiatives to eradicate programs of diversity, equity, and inclusion, we are participating in the annual Buffalo PRIDE Parade. The parade will be held on June 1, 2025 on Elmwood Avenue from Forest Ave. - Allen St. The Parade begins promptly at 11 am with participants lining up in advance on the Buffalo State campus. If you are interested in helping with the planning or participating, please let Pastor Daven know.

Books We Have Loved- Book Group

Meets on each 1st Friday

11:00 am



A book can transport you to places you'd like to go. Reading stimulates your thinking and your imagination. Getting immersed in a good story connects you to a bigger world around you and can sometimes feel like a best friend.

Paperback or hardcover, new or old, pristine or dog-eared, we love to hear about books, all of them! Haven't read a book this month? We love to share our books and recommendations for good reads. We look forward to sharing with you at Books We Have Loved!

➔ Don't forget the Library at Christ Church with books for all ages and the Take One/Bring One bookshelves located in the Cafe.

AAUW Buffalo Branch 69th Scholarship Book Sale

If you have **books, puzzles, games, CDs, DVDs, or audiobooks you no longer want**, please **donate them** to the giant **Used Book Sale** made famous by the **Buffalo Branch of the American Association of University Women**. Proceeds from the sale fund scholarships and interest-free loans for women from WNY pursuing higher education as well as community and national AAUW programs.

The **SALE** will be **May 28-June 1 at 425 Essjay Rd Williamsville NY 14221**. (Parking at 550 Essjay Rd. Look for our signs).

Admission: Wednesday, May 28 : 9a-11a \$25, 11a-1p \$15, 1p-8p \$10

Thursday-Saturday, May 29-31: 9a-8p \$1

Free admission Sunday June 1: 10a-5p BAG DAY \$5/regular size grocery bag. Bring your own bags!

Accepting **DONATIONS** from April 22-May 14 at 425 Essjay Rd.

Tuesday, 9a-8p, Wednesday, 9a-1p, Thursday-Friday 1p-5p, and Saturday 9a-noon. Donations are tax deductible.



SPIRITUAL FORMATION TEAM

AOL: Adult Opportunities for Learning

Getting to Good by David Livingston

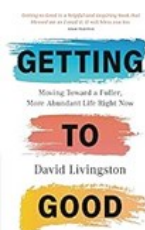
Moving Toward a Fuller, More Abundant Life Right Now

Sundays, April 6 – May 25

in the Wesley Room following worship

Books available for \$20.00

Facilitator: Peggy Bermudez



Getting to Good explores seven common struggles of

contemporary life. Through scripture, contemporary examples, and personal stories from the author, the reader will learn more about the causes of these issues and some concrete steps to get to a good place of their own.

Critically important, Getting to Good does not attempt to wish away the problems we face. Instead, it confronts them head-on. Life is not and will not be perfect and free from difficulty. But we can get to a good place even with our inevitable challenges.

Thirstaid

Jesus for Everyone: Not Just Christians

by Amy-Jill Levine

Thursdays, March 6 – May 15 on Zoom

(Zoom link will be in the Weekly Update.)



Explore why Jesus's historic and cultural influence makes him fascinating, provocative, and relevant for everyone, not only Christians.

Facilitators: Peggy Bermudez and Diane Klenk

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



United
Women
in Faith

Easter Treats Fundraiser

Sunday, April 13, following worship (Palm Sunday)

Homemade Baked Goods for Your Easter Celebration!

FREE WILL offering for baked goods will benefit UWF Missions.

If you would like to provide baked goods, please bring them wrapped and ready to go on April 13th. Thank you!

United Women in Faith Social Action Project



Christ Church UWF Is gathering used Crayons for **The Crayon Initiative**. The Crayon Initiative was born one night when Bryan Ware and his family went out for dinner. While his boys sat coloring on the menu, he couldn't help but wonder where restaurant crayons end up, when all the people go home.

Turns out, it's the landfill—making a big waxy mess that never biodegrades. Why, Bryan thought, couldn't they be re-purposed to create more joy in the world? He took the crayons home and got busy—figuring out the art of collecting and sorting old crayons, melting them down, and remanufacturing them in a bright, clean, paper-free form. Consulting an occupational therapist, he even gave his new crayons a unique design—large and three-sided, not round—so they're easy for kids to grip and can't roll off hospital trays.

Finally, he crafted a network for sending free crayons to kids in hospitals all over the country. Studies show that art therapy can reduce heart rates, improve cognition, release endorphins and alleviate stress. And most young patients take the crayons home with them as the happiest part of their stay. **John R. Oishei Children's Hospital in Buffalo participates in the Crayon Initiative.**

Please look for collection boxes at Christ Church and bring some joy to hospitalized children and the planet!



STEWARDSHIP TEAM

In honor of Earth Day celebrated April 22nd and May Day generally celebrated May 1st, we offer these special ways in which to renew our promise to care for this wonderful planet we all call home:

Choose native plants and other perennials when shopping for your garden needs. The more you plant this year the less you will need to buy in the future; butterflies, bees, birds, other pollinators and your budget will be very happy!

In rainy weather it's easy to forget the long dry spells caused by climate change. Look for ways to conserve water such as setting up a Rain Barrel, (we have flyers if you want to explore this option) planting tea bags with your flowers and veggies to hold moisture longer and "donating" leftover pet water to your plants.

Consider buying a backyard composter where you can deposit those pesky fruit and vegetable skins and other unusable/forgotten/spoiled foods (except animal protein) and garden waste such as grass clippings, dried leaves etc. Food waste is a major contributor to methane which spurs climate change and only adds to overwhelmed landfills.

Consider participating in your Town's opportunities to volunteer to clean up designated areas on Earth Day; the local Bee usually has these listed closer to the actual day. Otherwise contact your Town Supervisor or Highway Dept. You'll meet other like-minded folks, help improve your mood and maybe even burn a few extra calories..... always good, right? 😊

HERE'S TO A WARM AND JOYFUL SPRING!

Children's Ministry

1st and 3rd Sunday of every month 11a-Noon

Story Room 20 and Art Room 21

Our focus this season is on the Book of the Bible: Ephesians
Hope to see you there!



Easter Altar Flowers



Pink tulips, yellow daffodils, and white lilies will be on sale March 30 and April 6 at \$12 each. Sign up in the family room after church for your choice of flower/s to be placed on the altar in honor and/or memory of someone. Members of Altar Guild will be available to take your order.

FINANCE TEAM

The 2nd Sunday offerings were as follows:

The Colored Musicians Club: \$235.

Reconciling Ministries Network: \$230.

We also received for:

Human Relations Sunday: \$111.

Blanket Sunday: \$183.

Ash Wednesday: \$75.

Thanks to you all for your generous giving.

CUMC Finance Team

Message from Finance Committee Chair

Congregational Members,

On behalf of the finance team I wanted you to have a clear picture of 2024. We lost several church members in 2024 and that impacted the contributions that the Church received. We ended the year with a positive bottom line of \$1,985. Contribution income totaled \$209,488. Income from all sources totaled \$251,719. A significant effort was made by our Pastor to reduce the work hours of staff, and the Trustees did everything possible to keep our building expenses on budget. The cost of utilities and insurances continue to increase each year. The audit of our financial records for 2024 has been completed with no exceptions noted.

All of our committees did their share by watching expenses along the way. Despite a tight year financially we should be proud of the contributions we made to several mission related organizations. Our Christmas offering and second Sunday offerings have helped numerous organizations provide services to the greater community.

2025 will no doubt provide us with additional challenges, but through the annual pledge process and other gifts received, we will continue to make an impact well beyond our walls. I want to thank the members of the Finance Committee and other supporters including the folks who count the offerings each Sunday. We have a committed team who are fully committed to the mission and values of our church.

Bob Lovell,
Chair, Finance Committee

PLEDGES TO UWF

Your pledges to United Women in Faith support missions for women, children and youth globally, nationally and locally, including UMCOR, Compass House, Gateway, Jericho Road and Journey's End Refugee Services. 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 2025 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!

MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

Christ Church UWF for 2025

Sunday, April 13, Spring Bake Sale

Sunday, July 13, Churchwide Picnic (Rain Date July 20)

Sunday, October 26, Fall Bake Sale

Saturday, November 15, 10:00 am Breakfast Gathering



Niagara Frontier District UWF for 2025

Saturday, April 12, 9:30, Communion Breakfast and Memorial Service
at Churchill Memorial UMC, Boston, NY

Saturday, May 17, 9:30, Gift Day at Orchard Park UMC

July 24-26 – Mission U. at Camp Asbury, Silver Lake, NY

Saturday, September 20, 9:30, Annual Meeting at Agape UMC, West
Seneca

Saturday, November 8, 9:30, Network of Leaders at Asbury UMC, Getzville



CIRCLE NEWS

Elizabeth Circle will NOT meet in **April**.

They will meet **Tuesday, May 13 at 1pm at the church**
for a program about Dolls with Esther Kirdani.

Circle of Joy will join **the Handful of Hobby-ers on Thursday, April 3 at 6:30pm.**

On Thursday, May 1 at 7pm they will meet to work on the Moon
Catcher Project.

Missions of the Month

Thank You!

Souper Bowl Sunday - Thank you to everyone who contributed in any way to its success. We had a wide variety of soups and many people who supported our efforts. Together we raised just over \$600 for missions! We hope you enjoyed the soup!

AND

Thanks to your generous support of our recent Outreach Fundraisers, the Cookie and Candy Sale, and the Souper Bowl, Christ Church was able to send \$2000.00 to the Crisis Response Fund of the Refugee Partnership and \$500 to Seneca Street Church!

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

Native American Sunday Offering - May 4



United Methodists are called to recognize and honor the gifts and contributions made by Native Americans to our society and church. The United Methodist Church acknowledges a gap in understanding Native American life and culture, while affirming the sacredness of

Indigenous peoples, their languages, their unique identities, and their contributions to the church and the world.

Contributions help develop and strengthen Native American ministries within each United Methodist annual conference and provide scholarships for Native Americans pursuing ordained or licensed ministry.

Last year, almost \$240,000 was raised to support these vital ministries through the Native American Ministries offering.

Golden Cross Sunday - May 18



The financial gifts received on Golden Cross Sunday benefit ministries that provide care and support for those in need, including older adults, children, families, and those in need of hospital pastoral care.



Tim Smith-Minister of Music and his mother Helen Smith on his first Sunday as music director March 9, 2025



Timothy Smith earned degrees in church music and organ from Wheaton College (Illinois), Northwestern University, and The Boston Conservatory. A native of Cape Cod, he finished high school in Holland, New York and first studied organ with Squire Haskin in Buffalo.

Tim's training included organ scholar positions at St. James Cathedral in Chicago, Millar Chapel at Northwestern, Church of St. Mary the Virgin in New York City, and King's Chapel in Boston where he assisted Dr. Daniel Pinkham. His own church positions include two years as Principal Organist at West End United Methodist Church in Nashville. More recently, he has led music programs in Columbus Ohio, Annapolis Maryland, and Binghamton. Tim apprenticed in organ building, and his company Smith & Gilbert LLC maintains, moves, and refurbishes pipe organs. He is also a founder and executive director of The Portageville Chapel, America's retreat for organists next to Letchworth State Park. He and his mother Helen enjoy living on the banks of the Genesee and play lots of Scrabble.



Baptism of
Aubrey Patricia Loliger
February 16, 2025



It was a joy to celebrate the baptism of Aubrey Loliger! We have been blessed to have Aubrey in worship and now join with Brad and Mary in a commitment to nurture her faith in the church.



We also welcomed new members in December, Olivia Bryant & Jennifer Ellis. Olivia is a second year law student at UB. Jennifer works in IT for a firm in Rochester and is able to work remotely while Olivia pursues her education. A canine companion also blesses their home and lives together. We have

been blessed to have Olivia's voice in choir and Jennifer's assistance with physical and technical puzzles along with both their presence during 'Make A Difference Day.' They add energy and vibrancy to worship and life at Christ Church which is blessed to have them.