

The Blues

The days get shorter
the blues come...so do cloths and
candles.... Advent. Blue. **Hope.**

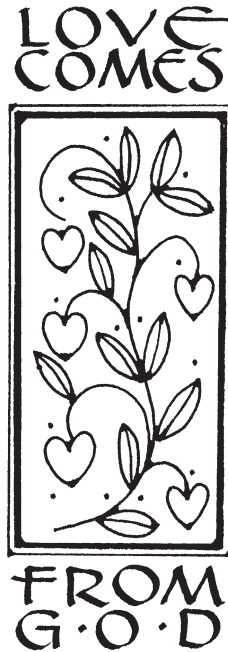
Injustice and War
Singing the blues... because **peace**
when? now but not-yet...

Joy in the morning
but what about through the night?
Blues will pass, new day.

Waiting and longing
for the coming of the One,
Love, banishes the blues!

Looking forward to sharing Hope with you this
season... and Peace, Joy, and Love!

Pastor Nina



Advent Open House
Nichols-Torres Home
12 Westover Road
Saturday, December 12th
2-4pm
Beverages and Treats
All are Welcome!

Advent Worship
Sundays, 10:30
A Life-Giving Christmas
Nov. 28th

“Hope... Next Year, things will be
different!”

Dec. 5th
“Peace...strength to hold on”
Bells and Communion
Victorian Stroll 12:30-5:00

Dec. 12th
“Joy...to get me through the tough
days”

Dec 19th
“Love...gotta have it”
Advent Pot-luck Lunch & Party &
Carol Sing

Christmas Eve
Thursday,
December 24th
7:00pm
Communion and Candlelight

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Music Ministry

Lots going on and many ways to plug in if you'd like.

Victorian Stroll: On December 5th many of our musicians will be playing not only in church but also for the visitors to our church that afternoon...see the Victorian Stroll program in this Spire for more info--should be fun!

Festival Choir: still time to join if you're interested! Advent (for December 12th) and Christmas (for December 24th) songs are being prepared--rehearsals Wednesdays at 8pm.

Bell Choir/Ensemble: the Bell Choir will play not only in church this month, but also for the Victorian Stroll. It is possible that a smaller Bell Ensemble will play for our Christmas Eve service.

Sunday Hymn Leaders: we continue to experiment and recently have welcomed the singers from our iGen group. If you'd like to help with leading hymns, feel free to join us.

Hymn Sing: (3rd Sunday is December 19th) from 10:15-10:30. In November, Michael Lopez shared a beautiful solo of "Morning has Broken." Plan to join us around the piano before church and be ready to suggest and sing your favorite hymns before the morning's worship.

2010 Thanksgiving Choir Fest: Our i-Gen Group danced and sang at the Joy of Troy (Adventist folks who once worshipped upstairs here) in Lansingburgh on November, 20. It was great fun to represent Christ Church among the various other churches and groupings! I-Gen will be performing the same program for the Victorian Stroll.

Special Music: Play an instrument? Sing? If you'd like to share your gifts by preparing a musical offering of some sort, please feel free to do so. Just let me know and we'll get it on the calendar. This includes not only music that would be played during worship, but also selections that might immediately precede or follow our Sunday worship.

George Garin, Music Minister

Poinsettias

If you receive your Spire before Sunday, December 5th, you can still order a plant (or plants) for the Christmas altar arrangement to remember or honor someone special to you. Just contact Marilyn Blom (283-2357), a pastor or use a pew envelope. The cost is \$9.00 for red and \$10.00 for white.

The larger arrangement will be in place for Sunday, December 19th and Christmas Eve. If you are taking your plant(s) and will be here for the Christmas Eve service, you can do so after the service--or anytime sooner if you cannot be here that evening. We try to bring a plant to our shut-in members and friends before Christmas.

Festival Celebration Choir

'ARISE! Your Light Has Come' is the theme for the annual Christmas Concert of the Festival Celebration Choir. The performance will be at 2 p.m. Sunday, December 12th, at the Church of St. Pius X, Loudonville. For further information, see Marilyn Blom or the bulletin board poster (which should be posted by now).

Devotion Nancy Burgin

My friend and I were catching up and shopping and noticed solar lights for gardens. I said, "Ron put up solar motion detector lights." The clerk who was nearby perked up and asked, "Where did he find those?" "Harbor Freight, on Central."

Did I start out the evening planning to be a solar advocate? It didn't even cross my mind. I was just telling a friend what we had been doing lately and since that was one of the things, it slipped into the conversation.

That can be one of the ways our beliefs can be shared, just in every day conversation. Peter says, "Be ready to answer any one who asks you to explain the hope you have in you." (1 Peter 3:15) Notice he doesn't say, "Stand out on a street corner and shouting and waving your Bible." Just "Be ready to share the reason for your hope." When God is a part of our every day lives, people will see that we have hope. And if they ask, we can willingly share our reason why.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Regular Sunday Schedule 9:30am: Church School (All ages) 10:30am: Worship 11:30am Coffee fellowship			1 7pm Bells 8pm Voice choir	2	3	4
5 Victorian Stroll Poinsettia orders due	6 6:30pm Wshp Planning	7 9am Wshp Planning 10:30am LTQ 2.0 6pm i-Gen 7pm Disciple	8 7pm Bells 8pm Voice choir	9 7pm Church conference	10	11
12 Childrens gifts due	13 6:30pm Wshp Planning	14 9am Wshp Planning 10:30am LTQ 2.0 6pm i-Gen 7pm Disciple	15 7pm Bells 8pm Voice choir	16	17	18
19 Hymn Sing Christmas Lunch & party	20	21 9am Wshp Planning 6pm i-Gen 7pm Disciple	22 7pm Bells 8pm Voice choir	23	24 7pm Christmas Eve Worship	25 Christmas Day
26 Spire Deadline	27	28	29	30	31	

December Birthdays.

2nd	Edward Goyette	6th	Mary Ingraham	6th	James Strock
7th	Donna Pryor	9th	Brian Best	9th	Heather Jean Grignon
11th	Mary Anne Valentine	13th	Dorothy MacDonald	13th	Lori LaMere
13th	Christopher Feiden	14th	Mike Urzan	15th	Heather Marie Bunting
16th	Eleanor Van Pelt	17th	Brittany Horton	19th	Melissa Adami
25th	Mary Beth Blackmon	26th	Nancy Matot	29th	Nancy Haldin
31st	Chrystal Horton	31st	Ginny Lovegrove		



Season's
Greetings

December Wedding Anniversaries

28 th	Janet & Mike Douglass
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November Flowers

7 th	Given in memory of William Ewing Smith & Elva Hills Smith by their children, David H. Smith & Elizabeth Smith Eisenhower.
14 th	Given by Thila & Harry Bell in memory of loved ones.
21 st	Thanksgiving Sunday--The Altar Harvest arrangement is offered in thankfulness for God's many gifts to us all.
28 th	First Sunday in Advent

Festival Offerings are Defined by Generosity

It gives me much joy to report that our Thanksgiving offering totaled \$486.00. We split the offering, with half going to Joseph's House Inn from the Cold program and half going to support Christ Church. Despite the many choices and demands on our incomes, this offering increased from last year.

The image of the Peace Cranes and their use during this season led us to search for a Christmas Festival offering that would promote peace. One of the special offerings we can give to at any time during the year is Peace with Justice. Here is the story of the Jerusalem Justice and Peace Ministry, which is supported by grants from the Peace with Justice offering.

The Jerusalem Justice and Peace Ministry (JJPM) was founded in 2006 and is located in Lubumbashi (Katanga) DRC. This ministry was started to help relieve the suffering of abused women by giving them hope even when society had stigmatized them. In a world where 250,000 children are forced to be fighters or sex slaves, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) is the largest persistent violator, according to the United Nations Security Council. Because of the war, young boys are forced to enlist in the rebel army. Sexual assault of women and young girls has become the norm. Our offering will help purchase sewing machines to support the women as they gather in a "Sewing Atelier" to work and learn about social justice.

The offering will also help pay for needed food and clothing for exploited children. The United Methodist Church Karavia Primary School was destroyed in 1992 during the civil war. JJPM is trying to educate the children who would have attended this school. Your offering will support JJPM as it works to remove unjust systems and equip the victimized to live more fulfilled lives.

During the Christmas season, our festival offering will be split with Peace with Justice in support of the Jerusalem Justice and Peace Ministry and Christ Church.

"Those who are generous are blessed, for they share their bread with the poor."

--Proverbs 22:9, NRSV

Thank you, Lee Kemp, Finance Chair

Stewardship Celebration

Now that the stewardship campaign is completed, I would like to share with you some of what your pledge means:

We have a full time pastor, an assistant pastor, a church musician and 2 nursery staff people. These people are actively engaged in ministry through worship, teaching, and outreach.

We provide space. Our building is rapidly becoming a community resource. We house the offices of Habitat for Humanity. AA meets during the day. The AIDS council meets during the evening. Everything from Yoga to Country Dance to Tango uses the Wesley room on weeknights. Troy City Council uses the sanctuary for their meetings.

Several times a year we reach out to meet the needs of our local community. This year we are hosting Joseph's House Inn from the Cold during November and December. The annual block party offers free entertainment and food to anyone who wants to come. The March Mission Madness spaghetti dinner raises funds for the helping agencies of downtown Troy. This Christmas season we are also offering space for the Unity House gift program along with our usual gifts purchased for the children of families at Joseph's House.

We have several Christian education classes going at any given time. There is weekly Sunday school for children and adults. There is also "Tuesday" school, courses offered usually on Tuesday evening or during the day by Pastor Nina or Pastor Janet. Right now, Disciple I is finishing up on Tuesday evening and the Tuesday day class is beginning Living the Questions 2.0.

The music program is diverse and inspiring. The Festival voice choir, hand bell choir and I-Gen choir enrich our worship experience. Just recently, the I-Gen choir performed at the Joy of Troy music festival.

We are a connectional church. We support the wider community through apportioned funds, Special Sunday offerings, and Designated giving. For instance, this year we contributed over \$1400 for Haitian relief.

Thank you for continuing to support God's work through this church in downtown Troy as we continue our journey together with Christ – questioning, serving and growing.

Lee Kemp on behalf of the Finance Committee

Envelopes are in.

Offering envelopes will be available for pick up starting December 12 in the hallway outside fellowship hall. If you completed a pledge or requested envelopes, please pick them up before the end of the year. Having an offering envelope ensures you will receive credit on your statement if you give your gift in the form of cash. If you haven't completed a pledge for 2011 or would like to have envelopes with a number, please see one of the pastors or Lee Kemp.

December 19th Advent/ Christmastide Luncheon

This year in lieu of having a holiday pageant we are choosing to have a pot-luck luncheon after Sunday service for all to join. There will be a sign-up sheet outside the church office for dishes for the pot luck. Please feel free to sign up as soon as possible. NO DESSERTS PLEASE - we have a special surprise for dessert for everyone.

If interested in sharing a simple craft of holiday story with the group please see Sharen, Theresa and Ron. Thank you for your support and help in making this a joyful event.

Cranes and Angels

The 1000 Peace Cranes which have graced our sanctuary for more than half a year have come down as we begin Advent. Some have been adopted so that they can follow the traditional path of being exposed to the elements, their prayers being released as the paper drops away. One whole "flight" will take up residence in Fellowship Hall; the brightest row are decorating the sanctuary Christmas trees through Epiphany. The cranes brought in visitors and media; for us they were the back drop to our post Easter series on Peace.

Now the angels are about to be raised for a third year: three huge silk gauge angels against their midnight sky: a reminder of the Christmas angels who sang Peace and Goodwill to the world.

These huge installations are the work of a dedicated few. The engineering - how we can hang them without endangering 140 year-old plaster - is the work of Alice Rose, ably supported by a faithful team of helpers. It is not easy to do, but the end results have been much appreciated. If you have been inspired by angels and cranes - if you have ideas on ways of using art in our worship space: it does not have to be as grand as an overhead installation- we hope you will share your dreams so that we can worship God through all our senses and with all our gifts and graces.

A Life-giving Christmas: our Advent worship series

We are basing our Advent worship on a series on the umc.org website. It describes the series like this:

"Have you ever woken up the day after Christmas feeling like you missed it? That with all the craziness (shopping, parties, cooking, family visits, etc.,) you just didn't get the experience you had hoped for?"

This Christmas, Rethink Church invites you to A Life-giving Christmas – to widen the lens, focus on the real...the authentic...the things that really matter and the true gift of the season – life. And not just any life – rich, meaningful life from a very real part of God – God's own son. Hope, peace, joy and love are not just candles to be lit around an advent wreath – they are facets of a living Christ to be ignited in our lives and our communities. Christmas can be that time of refueling for the new year ahead, if we carefully invest ourselves and engage life-giving principles.

This four-week lectionary-based sermon series will engage your congregation in very tangible ways:

- Personal and Social Challenges ask participants to stretch themselves in association with each week's theme.
- Practical applications promote engaging the scripture throughout the week, and make "putting into practice" an essential part of the faith.
- Social media ideas encourage interaction with people beyond the congregation before and after the message.

"A Life-giving Christmas" will challenge your community to experience Christmas differently this year by practicing hope, peace, joy and love beyond the walls. "

If you use Facebook, don't forget to "like" Christ Church and receive the weekly worship question.

Christ Church United Methodist

35 State Street, Troy, New York 12180

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Victorian Stroll

This year's Victorian Stroll program at Christ Church will rock! Along with the Cookie Stroll (still time to sign up to bring cookies or to help with the sales that afternoon), Holiday Crafts and some free refreshments we have an afternoon filled with magic and music. There won't be any better anywhere in Troy that day!

Invite your friends and family to stop in at some point and enjoy the Magic of Dave McDonald or the Music of groups such as our own Bell and iGen Choirs, an international folk band from the Johnstown area, the wonderful singing of Patti Melita and more (see the program below)

An Afternoon of Music and Magic (Victorian Stroll, December 5th, 2010)

12:30 Music fun (Andrew, Irena, and Tri-City Trad musicians George, Jennifer and Fritz).

1:00pm Magic with Dave McDonald

1:30pm Bell Choir of Christ Church

1:50pm Christ Church iGen Music Group

2:00pm Penny Jar (international folk music)

2:30pm Bell Choir of Christ Church

2:50pm Christ Church iGen Music Group

3:00pm Penny Jar (international folk music)

3:30pm Magic with Dave McDonald

4:00pm Jazz Vocalist Patti Melita

What is it?

Use your smart phone



Spire Deadline

The deadline for the December Spire is Sunday December 26th.

God intends the church to be a community that embodies love, grace, and justice for all people. As a Reconciling Congregation, we therefore affirm the sacred worth of and welcome persons of any sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, marital status, race, ethnic background, economic condition, and physical or mental ability as full participants in our community of faith. God's love includes everyone, as does Christ Church United Methodist.

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