

## Friends

When it hasn't been your day, your week, your month, or even your year. But...

I'll be there for you  
 When the rain starts to pour  
 I'll be there for you  
 Like I've been there before  
 I'll be there for you  
 'cause your there for me, too.  
*Rembrandts', Theme song for Friends*

Our theme for Lent 2010 is "Friends"

I don't know how many of you watched the TV show Friends, but the lyrics from the Rembrandts song "I'll Be There for You" for fans will immediately call to mind Monica, Rachel, Phoebe, Chandler, Joey, and Ross. For some I imagine the song and the show touched on something remembered, for others something longed for, and for the very blessed a group of people for whom you give thanks everyday. A pastor/mentor/friend of mine used to say the church should be like the TV show Cheers: where everybody knows your name and they're always glad you came. Yes, I think; but I wonder if the church can or should be something more than that? Are we called to be friends?

I hope to see you in worship this season where we can together ask and begin to answer that question, personally and corporately.

Prayer: Loving God, On days when I feel like I am without a friend, help me find my way closer to you. Help me remember that on some days I am standing near someone who may, themselves, feel like they are without a friend... shape me into a generous one. Amen  
 Grace and Peace, Pastor Nina

### 1000 Prayers for Peace

In April, May, and June you can be part of an exciting art project at Christ Church. Each prayer for peace will be transformed into an origami paper crane, and we'll be installing waves of these cranes over 5 weeks. In the end, there will be a flock of more than 1000 prayers overhead. So, how can you help? We need volunteer crane-folders--don't worry if you don't know how, we'll teach you! We hope to involve more than 100 people in this project. Can you be one of them?

We also need 12-inch by 12-inch squares of paper, specifically we would like old wrapping paper or magazine pages. Standard scrapbook paper is too heavy for this project. But wrapping paper and magazine paper are good weights. It doesn't matter if they have folds in them; we just need to be able to make 12-inch by 12-inch squares from them. For magazine paper, if you have some that are at least 12 inches high and stapled in the middle, we can remove the staples and trim the pages into squares.

We'll have more information in coming SPIRES. But in the meantime, if you'd like to talk to someone about the project, contact Dorcas Rose, David Barbour, Sharen Holcomb, Alice Rose, or one of the pastors. We hope you'll support this project and share our excitement as it folds and unfolds.

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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.

### **Greg Mortenson - SAAT discussion and trip**

As a part of our efforts to promote an awareness of the wonderful humanitarian work of Greg Mortenson and the Central Asia Institute, the Social Awareness and Action Team is sponsoring the following activities:

1. We are encouraging members and friends of CCUM to read Mortenson's two outstanding books, *Three Cups of Tea* and *Stones to Schools*. *Three Cups of Tea* was discussed on Sunday, February 28 and *Stones to Schools* will be discussed March 28 at 4 PM at the church. Nancy Campbell is our discussion leader. A light meal will be served. Sign-up sheets are on the church office window, as we need a head count for the meal.

2. We are also coordinating a trip to Westfield State College, Westfield, MA to hear Greg Mortenson speak on April 29. The lecture begins at 7 PM, but we are planning to leave about 4:45 to arrive in time to find good seats. A book signing will occur after the lecture. We are attempting to carpool to that event, so if you plan to go, please let me know when you purchase tickets. Ticket price is \$35 per person. Tickets can be ordered on line at the college's website: [www.wsc.ma.edu/](http://www.wsc.ma.edu/) Just click on "Greg Mortenson Tickets." When the next window opens click "Registration" at the top of the page. A form will appear for buying tickets. If you prefer to call, the numbers are: 413-572-8356 or 413-572-5580. Greg Mortenson events tend to sell out rather quickly, so if you are interested in making the trip, you show act quickly. At some point following the lecture SAAT will sponsor one additional discussion of Mortenson's work, if there appears to be sufficient interest.

3. Stay tuned for a fund raising effort, Pennies for Peace, which we hope to coordinate with youth church school. More on that later.

Greg Mortenson was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2009, and I am confident he will win, if not in 2010, sometime soon.

Bob Blackmon

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### **March Bible Study, Tuesdays @ 7: 30pm**

#### ***Amos***

The Old Testament book of Amos is just 9 chapters long and has a surprisingly relevant message. Over 4 evenings we will read the book together and chat about what it means for us today. Attendees of the Borg/ Crossan "Eclipsing Empire" study last year heard them urge that we study Amos and interesting questions, supplied by OT scholar Walter Brueggemann, will guide our conversation.

Janet Douglass

### **March Mission Madness**

Spring is coming and its time to celebrate with MARCH MISSION MADNESS!!! This is an opportunity to learn about and support 5 local organizations which provide excellent services to people facing difficult circumstances in our community. During March we will encourage contributions to Joseph's House and Shelter, Bethany Center, Unity House, TAUM, and the YWCA as a way of helping them to help those in need.

The way it works is this: You can make a donation to any or all of the groups any time during the month by putting your contribution in the offering plate or sending it to the church office. Please clearly indicate your intention about which organization(s) should receive your donation. Checks can be made out to Christ Church with MMM and your designated organization(s) on the description line. On March 20th, we will host a spaghetti dinner. Attendees may use their tickets to support one or more organizations. All designated contributions and dinner proceeds will be distributed according to donor wishes; undesignated funds will be distributed to the organizations in the same proportion as funds have been designated.

### **We'll be selling Churros again**

Paul Marano has already confirmed dates with the city and we will be selling closer to home this year. As well as River Fest (6/19), we intend being at the Troy Pig Out (7/17 and 7/18) and we will be at the free concert event, Rockin' on the River, each Wednesday from 6/23 until 8/25. if you did not help last year, think about giving it a try. We have fun together, we have fun giving out free samples and we make some money. Sign-up sheets will appear nearer the time but mark your calendars now!

### **Italian Cooking Class**

Chef Paul Marano will once again share the secrets of great Italian meatballs and homemade sauce as we prepare for the Spaghetti Dinner. Come join the fun on Thursday, March 18th from 5:30 – 8:30.

### **Spaghetti Dinner – March 20th**

Mark your calendars. Plan to come! Bring your appetite, your family and your friends! Our big event to wrap up March Mission Madness and raise funds for agencies which help those in need in our community will be on Saturday, March 20th from 5:00 to 8:00. Group pre-orders may be picked up at 4:30. This historically successful, effective, fun fundraiser will once again be co-sponsored by the Robert C. Parker School; their 7th graders have adopted it and will be on hand to help serve and clean-up. We will need volunteers and dessert bakers. Please sign-up on the sheets posted on the office window.

### **Talent Auction 2010: Under New Management**

Anyone watching the Winter Olympics could see that the champions got a lot of joy from doing what they did best. The Christ Church Talent Auction may not bring you Olympic glory, but it DOES give you a chance to show off your talents while helping the Church. Last year's generous participants added \$1096 to the Church's operating budget. Everyone's good at something, and this is a perfect opportunity to flaunt your creativity. Past auctions have included talents as varied as car washing, crocheting, scarf-dyeing, baking, aura reading, lunch hosting, and computer consulting, to name just a few. Darlene Brooks has graciously offered to run this year's auction, with the able assistance of Lee Kemp, so speak to one of them if you'd like to get in on the fun. Bid sheets will be posted in early May.

### **Devotion - Nancy Burgin**

It had been a frustrating trip to Binghamton. My sister was in Intensive Care, sedated, because of the possibility of clots in her lungs. (She's fine now, thank you.) Hearing this news, I jumped in the car, picked up Mom in Oneonta, and rushed to Binghamton. Did you catch that I said my sister was sedated? I didn't. We got there and there was little we could do. We got her health care proxy to the nurses and got clothes for her and...That was it. There was nothing else to do. We couldn't even visit with her because she wasn't conscious.

This got me thinking about what Jesus said in Matthew 25. "I was sick and you visited me." Not, "You healed me", not "You paid my doctor's bills". Just "You visited me." We aren't being asked to solve the problem, in this instance (Unlike the "I was hungry and you fed me. I was naked and you clothed me.") No, in this situation, we are just asked to BE there for the other person, to listen to their feelings and to show we care. May we carry God's love in this way to our church and to our world.

### **Souper Bowl a Success!**

On Thursday, February 18th, seven young people from our Sunday School hand delivered 178 items to our neighbors at the Roarke Center food bank. A check for nearly \$200 will also be forwarded to the food bank. There were many "thank you's" from the sisters and other volunteers who manage this program. And we wanted to extend those thank yous to all of you for helping make this a successful event. Thank you for your donations of food items and cash donations. The sisters told us it has been a hard year for many families and donations like ours help keep the shelves stocked for families in need.

### **Ecologically better palms for Palm Sunday!**

Are you in?

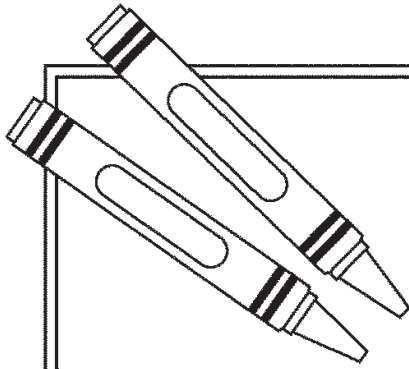
UMCOR, along with other denominational agencies, is partnering with the University of Minnesota to build support in the US for the Eco-Palm Project, which ensures that palm harvesters in Guatemala and Mexico are earning a fair income for their labor. These palms are not only grown in a more sustainable way, using harvesting practices that minimize the environmental impact on rainforests, but also provide work where jobs are hard to get.

There is a financial cost to our

committing to this route. The palms we usually buy cost \$30 less. Are you willing to help us buy eco-palms this Lent by donating a dollar towards their cost? Add it to your pledge check and make a note of the amount for "palms" in the memo line or put it in an envelope in the offering plate. (and cross off another square on your Carbon Fast card!)

### **Adult Forum**

Adult Forum before church starting around 9:30 will be discussing Christianity's statements of faith or creeds during Lent. Feel free to drop in and join the discussion. What do you find helpful as a guiding principle for life?



# Just for KIDS

## Parables

Jesus used stories called parables to teach his followers. Sometimes we have to look for their meaning!

Find the names of these parables in the puzzle below. You will find them across, diagonal, up and down. Be sure to circle all of the words in each name.

sower  
weeds  
yeast  
pearl  
net  
tenants  
talents

lost sheep  
lost son  
lost coin  
growing seeds  
rich fool  
ten virgins  
mustard seed

hidden treasure  
wedding banquet  
shrewd manager  
persistent widow  
unmerciful servant  
good Samaritan  
workers in the vineyard

S O W E R T A L E N T S P A T B C D E F  
 V U E T N T S R G P O N E M E K J I H G  
 A B E C Y E D E F G H I A J N K L M N O  
 H I D D E N T R E A S U R E A B Q E Q P  
 M U S T A R D S E E D E L A N C D M R W  
 S D E E S G N I W O R G D B T X L O M E  
 R L O S T S H E E P T L C V S P W R N D  
 W O R K E R S I N T H E V I N E Y A R D  
 A L B I C D E F G H E I J K L M N O P I  
 L O S T C O I N J H G N F D E W A G A N  
 A S L N C H F J L N M C V Y T E R R B G  
 B T K M F O F G A M Y L O I M N E D C B  
 C S J J S H G O O D S A M A R I T A N A  
 D O H K Q Z J P O J U L I A B G C V B N  
 E N G L A B K M N L E R I N A B I M T Q  
 P E R S I S T E N T W I D O W A N N B U  
 S H R E W D M A N A G E R R T Y H N S E  
 E F T N A V R E S L U F I C R E M N U T

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	<b>1</b> 7pm Worship Planning	<b>2</b> 7pm Disciple 7:30 Amos	<b>3</b> 6-9pm Choir	<b>4</b> 10:30am Bible Study 7pm Finance	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> 7pm Worship Planning	<b>9</b> 7pm Disciple 7:30 Amos	<b>10</b> 6-9pm Choir	<b>11</b> 10:30am Bible Study 7pm Trustees	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>14</b>	<b>15</b> 7pm Worship Planning	<b>16</b> 7pm Disciple 7:30 Amos	<b>17</b> 6-9pm Choir	<b>18</b> 10:30am Bible Study 5:30-8:30 meatballs 7pm Church Council	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 5pm- 8pm Spaghetti Dinner
<b>21</b> Spire Deadline	<b>22</b> 7pm Worship Planning	<b>23</b> 7pm Disciple 7:30 Amos	<b>24</b> 6-9pm Choir	<b>25</b> 10:30am Bible Study	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>28</b> 4pm Book discussion	<b>29</b> 7pm Worship Planning	<b>30</b> 7pm Disciple 7:30 Parables - makeup session	<b>31</b> 6-9pm Choir	Regular Sunday Schedule 9.30am: Church School (All ages) 10:30am: Worship 11:30am Coffee fellowship		

March Birthdays.

<b>2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Zachary Valentine	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	Rita Bardill	<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	Nick Sopchack Jr.
<b>6<sup>th</sup></b>	Rick Martucci	<b>10<sup>th</sup></b>	Jennifer Pryor	<b>15<sup>th</sup></b>	Mike Douglass
<b>23<sup>rd</sup></b>	Amanda Martucci	<b>24<sup>th</sup></b>	Warren Gibson	<b>25<sup>th</sup></b>	Kayla Fenimore
<b>29<sup>th</sup></b>	Arlene Lewis	<b>30<sup>th</sup></b>	Nicholas Sopchak Sr.	<b>31<sup>st</sup></b>	Cody Martucci

March Anniversaries.

<b>20<sup>th</sup></b>	Shirley & Chris Greagan
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February Flowers

<b>7<sup>th</sup></b>	HAPPY 40th BIRTHDAY Dave MacDonald, from Christine, Jessica & Tim
<b>14<sup>th</sup></b>	Given by Marta Andersen in memory of loved ones.
<b>21<sup>st</sup></b>	Given by their families in loving memory of George W. Large and John Wattendorf for their February 21st & 22nd birthdays
<b>28<sup>th</sup></b>	Given by Marilyn & Lowell Blom in memory of loved ones.

**Easter Plants**

Plants for the Easter altar arrangement in memory or honor of a special person or occasion in your life can be ordered until March 14th from Marilyn Blom, the church office or with a pew envelope. The cost is \$9.50 for lilies, red azaleas, variegated azaleas or tulips.

### **Mary Alice Barbour**

It is with sadness we announce the death of church member, Mary Alice Barbour. Not so long after she joined the church it was necessary for Mary Alice to go into a nursing home but she continued to enjoy visits from the church. She was remembered fondly at her memorial service by her great friend, Rev. Dr. George Garin who recalled her love of music and her encouragement and kindness. Pastor Nina officiated. Our condolences to her many friends and to her family.

### **Next Spire**

The next Spire deadline is Sunday March 21st

### **Save the date: Sunday, April 25th, 2010.**

Christ Church United Methodist will host a Rethink Church Luncheon Workshop. There is no fee to attend and in accordance with our welcoming statement, all are welcome. Workshop will begin at NOON following Sunday services and coffee hour. Light fare and refreshments will be provided to all participants. Our trainers will be our own Joshua Jones and Theresa Manciocchi. Please call the church office or sign-up on the office window to plan for food and materials.

### **Choir Rehearsals**

Festival Choir Rehearsals for Palm/Passion Sunday (March 28th) and Easter Sunday (April 4th) will be on Wednesdays in March from 8-9pm. All are welcome. There is a sign-up on the office window.

**Christ Church United Methodist**  
**35 State Street, Troy, New York 12180**  
**Return Service Requested**

Non-profit Org  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Troy, NY 12180  
Permit #496

### **Streaming Services**

*Gearing For Live Broadcasts of Our Services and Events Over the Internet*

The tech team is very excited about streaming our services and events "live" over the internet. Think of the possibilities...members of our congregation would be able to "attend" our services while out of town or not being physically able to attend church. In addition, friends, family and other loved ones who might not be able to attend wedding and memorial services would still be able to participate from afar. Not to mention that Christ Church could be reaching out to a whole new group of people looking for spiritual enrichment on-line. Before we begin "Streaming" we need your help.

The tech team is interested in having an open discussion, soliciting peoples' celebrations and concerns about taking this bold step. How would our worship experience change, if at all, knowing that we were opening up our services and events for all the world to see? Are there certain precautions we should take prior to embarking on this exciting journey? Please join us for a coffee talk on April 11th as we engage in this discussion.

### **Website Update**

Our website turns 6 years old this year! A lot has happened at Christ Church over the past 6 years and its time to take a close look at our website to determine if its still serving our needs. Please join us for a coffee talk on April 18th for a brainstorming session as we discover what changes may be needed to our site to have it continue to support the mission and ministry of Christ Church.

**Paul Marano**

Office phone 272-8392, Fax 273-8042, URL <http://www.ChristChurchTroy.org>

The Rev. Nina Nichols Senior Pastor email [pastornina@christchurchtroy.org](mailto:pastornina@christchurchtroy.org) Urgent phone: 588-6405

Janet Douglass, Assistant Pastor email [janetd@nycap.rr.com](mailto:janetd@nycap.rr.com) Urgent phone: 273-3713

The Rev. C. Joseph Ingraham, Pastor Emeritus