

**Christ Church is Making Connections & Offering Opportunities for  
Faith, Love & Service**

**Weekly Update - January 3**  
**Christ United Methodist Church**

Harlem & Saratoga Roads  
Amherst, NY 14226

**A Word From Pastor Daven**

The following is the anecdote I shared just prior to the beginning of our Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship. On this 10th day of Christmas it is good to be reminded once again of the message of the season and among these cold, windy snow-globe days to tend to the light which has been placed in our care.

**Many have taken part or at least participated in a Christmas pageant through the years. This story is one of a pageant past, on the day of it. Late in the production after most had taken their places in the re-creation of that familiar scene and delivered their lines, whispered words passed from the one playing Mary to Joseph - "Oh my gosh," she said, "I forgot Jesus.". Joseph, having just been visited in a dream in the play, seemed to embrace his role with a look like he had literally been visited. However, no others were suspicious of anything amiss and the play continued until the entry of the heavenly hosts. These angelic beings always seem to get cast**

by some of the youngest, with this year being no exception. Two of the three appeared on cue in the door, walking in paced and angelic.

Suddenly the third burst on the scene with her halo askew and wings awry with the baby doll serving as Jesus dangling by the arm at an unnatural angle. She charged down the aisle with the doll swinging by its arm calling out in wonderful unscripted truth - "You forgot Jesus, you forgot Jesus!"

There is a mystery to such unscripted moments that perhaps speak more acutely to where we are, so busy with scene changes, so focused on what's next, we forget the most important stuff - we leave Jesus behind. In this season and especially on Christmas Eve we are drawn inexplicably out to hear a message, we seek reason and purpose, to have an experience, looking to and for God in these quiet moments. And in these moments God in unscripted grace reaches to us through song, scripture, prayer, and by sharing with us the light which pierces even the darkest night. God stoops down in history in the incarnation asking us if there is room in our lives to care for such grace. I pray that we will not leave Christ out of the scene of our lives, but make room.

Let us take the tender flickering light of Christ in our hearts and allow it to there find a space where it can burn ever brighter filling our lives with meaning, with love, hope, peace and joy. Let us find in the child laying in a manger a new hope for the future. And let us sing with heavenly hosts as we respond sharing the light of Christ, bringing Christ into the scene of our lives and our world, "glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and goodwill to all."

In Christ,

Pastor Daven

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## Daily Bible Reading – 2018

## Shaping Our Life Experience

Excerpts from both the Old and New Testament are included each day. This is a great way to support your ongoing growth in faith and the Christ Church community as well.

January 3: Genesis 6-8; Matthew 3

January 4: Genesis 9-11; Matthew 4

January 5: Genesis 12-14; Matthew 5:1-26

January 6: Genesis 15-17; Matthew 5:27-48

January 7: Genesis 18-19; Matthew 6

January 8: Genesis 20-22; Matthew 7

January 9: Genesis 23-24; Matthew 8

### In Our Prayers

**Joy!** The staff of Christ Church wishes to thank all who gave to the staff Christmas gift! We are so blessed to partner alongside you all in making connections and offering opportunities for faith, love, and service! THANK YOU!

### In Our Healing Prayers...

\* Sue Estee, Sheldon Merritt, Lois Lewis, Janet Hill, The Kreib Family, Woody Rhinehart, Grace & Ross Markello, Jean Ericson, Kevin Cetola, Ed Fisher, Bob Snyder, Sissie Mooney, Peter Shanley

\*Those who are **care partners** with others

\*Pray for Chris Maliken, Lindsey Darling & Ian Johnson serving in the US Navy

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## This Week at Christ Church

### Church Office:

Mon., Wed., Fri. – 9 am to 5 pm,

Tues. & Thurs. – 9am to Noon

Wednesday, January 3 - 7 pm - Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, January 4 - 7 pm - Circle of Joy  
7 pm - Elizabeth Circle

Friday, January 5 - 11 am - Books We Have Loved

Sunday, January 7 - **9 am - Casual Praise Service**  
**10 am - a.o.l. (Adult Opportunities for Learning)**  
**10 am - FaithXpress Pajama Day!**  
**11 am - Traditional Worship Service**

**Supervised Child Care, Sky Box and Family Worship Space available**

*Visit the **Café Connection** each Sunday morning and enjoy delicious, fair trade, **New Day Coffee**, morning treats and friendly conversation.*

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### Food Pantries

Share food and personal care items through local food pantries -  
Tiger's Den & the Food Pantry at University Presbyterian Church

**Snacks (granola bars, etc.), Canned Tomato Products (paste, sauce, etc.). A freezer is available for your meat donations.**

**Please help us fill up our carts!!!** Paper goods and personal care items are always needed.

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**Pajama Day at FaithXpress!**

**Sunday, January 7**

**10 a.m.**

All children & youth are invited to wear their warm cozy pjs as we begin a series on “Caring for the Earth”. Come enjoy stories & games!

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**Adult Opportunities for Learning: (a.o.l. @ cumc)**

**Sundays at 10 am in the Wesley Room**

This Sunday, January 7, will be the first Sunday of a 6-session series:

***Five Means of Grace: Experience God's Love the Wesleyan Way***

On Sunday, Dec. 31 at the Sunday worship service, we experienced the Wesley Covenant Service, and reaffirmed our commitment to growth in faith, love, and service in the year ahead.

Based on The Wesley Covenant for Renewal, *Five Means of Grace* is a six-week, video-based study that will show you how to reorder your life through prayer, searching Scripture, receiving the Lord's Supper, fasting, and conferencing and worshipping together. You'll learn how to recognize and affirm the outward signs, words, and actions of an invisible divine grace, deepening your relationship with God and making your faith more complete. All are invited to

enter into this experience of growth in faith as we begin 2018. A contribution of \$16 is suggested to cover the cost of the class resources and study book.

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**Church Office Hours:**

Monday -Wednesday- Friday, 9 am to 5 pm  
Tuesday & Thursday, 9 am to Noon

**SUNDAY AT CHRIST CHURCH**

Casual Praise Worship at 9 am      Traditional Worship at 11 am  
Education Hour at 10 am