CHRIST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
“Making connections and offering opportunities for faith, love, and service”

Sunday Worship Schedule
Casual Praise Celebration 9 am  Education Hour 10 am
Traditional Style Celebration 11 am

TOTAL STEWARDSHIP: PRAYERS, PRESENCE, GIFTS, AND SERVICE

Pastor
Rev. Daven Oskvig
Minister for Christian Education & Community Life

Sally J. Pollard
Office Manager/Ministry Assistant

Janelle Martin
Minister of Music

Paul Staley
Financial Secretary

Doris Schanzlin
Custodian

David Wolf

350 Saratoga Road, Amherst, NY 14226
Phone: 839-2460   Fax: 839-2166
www.christchurchamherst.org   E-mail: Cumc350@gmail.com
OFFICE HOURS: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 9-5   Tuesday & Thursday 9-Noon

MARCH BIRTHDAYS
Marcia Snyder ..........................1
Gregory Yungbluth .....................3
Graciello Cordero .....................3
Kara Panasiewicz .....................4
Gregory Watson ......................7
Brad Bermudez .......................8
Molly Reed ...........................8
Christopher Kraatz .................9
Andrew Lopez .......................12
Joanne Gilbert .......................15
William Morris ......................16
Marshall Rhinehart ...............17
Marjory Gibson .....................19
Pat Noyes ...........................24
Peggy Bermudez ....................25
Ashley Miller .......................26
Jordan Maliken .....................29
Warren Hammond .................31
Jan Rhinehart .......................31

REMEMBER
Remember to save your cancelled postage stamps, Campbells Labels for Education, General Mills Box Tops for Education, as well as Dash’s register tapes for Gateway, and put them in the labeled box on top of the microwave in the kitchen. Thank you!!
Dearest Members & Friends,

As I stepped out into another single digit morning for a run, my ears suddenly caught the sound of hope rising to combat the cold and wind. I heard that suspicious melody of another season still present in the grips of this one, the birds happily regaling their chorus against all the odds of the day. As I had begrudgingly approached the workout ahead, I now found a new lightness in my step as the promise for warmer times dawned.

Doesn’t this always seem to be God’s mysterious way? As soon as our spirits are lowest, our faith challenged most, a ray of hope pierces the darkness. Of course, we experience this in nature like with the birds’ chorus in the snow or the crocus springing out hidden beneath winter’s cold grip. But also it exists in so many other ways. Maybe it is the phone call shared just when we need it or the card with well wishes; or maybe it is the kind gesture by a stranger when everything in our day is going horribly wrong. Also, through our worship in Lent, the scriptures we hear all encourage us to see the barely visible light that death shall not have the last word. Even as we travel with Jesus to Jerusalem and through the events that take place there into the cold dark grasp of a tomb, we hold onto a sense that God’s grace and love is unable to be sealed away, choked off from us. And on Easter morning the light of God’s grace dawns against all odds brightening the darkest valleys with the Son’s shine.

The truth is that love is all around if we care to open our eyes and open our ears. God provides these glimpses and voices to us that darkness and despair will not overwhelm us, but hope and love will sustain us. And … we too can embody this hope and love to others as followers of Christ through the words of our mouths and the actions of our hands. After all, we ARE resurrection people…!

Yours In Christ,

Pastor Daven
Outreach Missions of the Month - March 2018

One Great Hour of Sharing

On March 11 we will join all other United Methodist churches in making our contributions to the United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR.)

We all know the great work that UMCOR does helping victims of fire, floods, hurricanes, and other kinds of disasters. This year has been especially bad when it comes to people being caught in these horrible situations.

The great thing about UMCOR, in addition to the work that it provides, is that one hundred percent of the dollars we donate goes directly to support these efforts. Administrative costs are derived from other sources.

Thank you for your gifts to UMCOR!

Central City Café

The Central City Café is a mission of the Durham Memorial A.M.E. Church located at 174 E. Eagle Street, Buffalo, NY. Several times each year we have the opportunity to prepare casseroles which can serve 225 meals. (Each casserole feeds 15 people.) Our next opportunity is March 3. Pans and recipes will be available after each service if you would like to assist with this ministry. Another way to get involved in this ministry is to volunteer at Central City Café the second Tuesday of the month. Help is needed preparing and serving the meal. There is a sign-up in Crafts Hall. The café is located at 74 E. Eagle Street, Buffalo, NY. For more information, please contact Kathy Weaver, Lee Watson, or Peggy Bermudez.

Finance Team—March

The latest report on pledges shows that 94 units have pledged a total of $207,204. Your commitment to the future of Christ Church is inspiring. It is never too late to turn in your pledge commitment; the pledge cards are on the table at the back of the Worship Space as you enter from the Family Room. There are also sign-up sheets there should anyone want offering envelopes. The January 2nd Sunday offering for Harvest House was $146 and the Human Relations offering was $143.

The CUMC Finance Team

With Joy… From Sally

In a world increasingly characterized by fear and suspicion, what is the Church called to be? In an article by Professor of Religious Studies (St. Norbert College, Wisconsin) Paul J. Waddell, he describes an icon in an abbey in Austria. “In the background of the picture was a small town or community. People could be seen walking the streets of the town as they attended to the tasks of the day. In the foreground was a large table. Seated around the table were people sharing a meal. Everyone in the icon looked quite ordinary except for one thing—a glow or halo encircled the head of each person. The icon was entitled, “Xenophilia,” love and friendship for strangers.” Professor Waddell goes on to explain that the title invited him to look at the icon differently because it suggested that not everyone walking the streets or sitting at the table was a citizen of the town, some were strangers and outsiders and people from elsewhere. But they were able to enter the town because there was nothing to suggest that some were welcome and others were not. Anyone could feel at home in this town because everyone was welcomed as a friend. Instead of xenophobia—the fear of the stranger—this little town embodied the befriending hospitality of God. And everyone who walked its streets glowed with holiness because they had learned to love whatever neighbors came their way, especially the ones it’s easy to exclude or ignore. Whether they were host or guest, citizen or stranger, love was being given and received.

How will we make connections and offer opportunities that will create bonds of friendship with others? The central purpose & work of God in Jesus was reconciliation and peace. Anyone who chooses to be a Christ follower is called to do the same, to remove the barriers that divide us. Barriers rise up when differences of gender, physical & mental ability, religion or lifestyle choices cause us to close off and be unwelcoming. Sometimes we erect barriers because of unhealed hurts or painful memories. Instead of nurturing friendship we disconnect. Human beings are experts at ignoring & excluding people and situations that make us uncomfortable, that challenge us and remake or reshape our world. That’s always a risk with openness and hospitality. In our world that seems to be growing more guarded and harsh, we are still called to imitate the table manners of Jesus, whose fearless love knew no boundaries. Making connections and offering opportunities for faith, love, and service is the Christ Church way of standing in hopeful contrast to the deep darkness of the world. And we will glow with the goodness & love of God. And everyone who comes will see it—even if we don’t see it ourselves.
Dear Friends and Staff at CUMC,
Thank you so much for all the thoughtful prayers, beautiful cards, comforting phone calls, and well wishes I received as I recovered from my mid-December fall. Your caring and support really helped to brighten my days! I do miss seeing everyone at church, and I hope to be healed enough to be back again in March. God bless you for all your kindness!

~Love, Mary Ball
It is a season that brings thoughts of discipline, sacrifice, endurance. It may not lead us to consider the ways God enters into aspects of our lives morning, noon, and night. Lent is a season that invites us to live differently, to release, to let go of things and practices that may have hold of us so that we might gain an awareness of the meaning they have for us. Here are some ways you may respond to Lent’s invitation...

**Lent – Morning, Noon & Night**
For use at home – “Give It Up”
What holds your attention and occupies your mind? You could give those things up for a week if you wanted to, right? Take a journey of self-discovery and learn how the power of release brings great gain. Saying “yes” to this challenge of letting go could bring you closer to God. Pick up a book and enter the experience of release and reflection.

**Group Study – Tuesdays at 12 noon – “Give It Up”**
Take the experience of letting go a step further. Bring your lunch and gather with others on the Lenten journey of release. Share insights, reflections, and find encouragement & deeper meaning through the practice of release.

**Morning Prayer – Wednesdays at 10 am**
Join Pastor Daven for this mid-week time of prayer, simple chant, and scripture each Wednesday morning during Lent. On Wednesdays at 10 am you are invited to come and establish a rhythm for your day in the simplicity of morning prayer.

**Study “Women of the Bible” — Thursdays 1-2:30 pm**
Take a look at the lives of some of the women of the Bible with Diane Klenk on Thursday afternoons, February 15, 22, March 1, 8.

**Friday evenings – Music & Meditation – 5:30 pm**
Give yourself the gift of peace. Slow down & rest in the candle light. Allow the music, scripture, prayer, and meditation to penetrate your whole being.

**Maundy Thursday 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, footwashing, the Lord’s Supper, and the stripping of the church.

Footwashing is a powerful symbolic response to the Word, dramatizing the servanthood of Jesus, both on the night before his death and in his continuing (Continued on pg. 9)

**NIAGARA FRONTIER DISTRICT UNITED METHODIST WOMEN**

**Communion Breakfasts & Memorial Services**
Saturday, March 24, 2018
Registration and Breakfast: 9:30 am
Program: 10:30 am
Cost: $5

**LYNDONVILLE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
102 N. Main St, Lyndonville, NY 14098
Speaker: Karen Wehn on Climate Justice

**HAMBURG UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
116 Union St, Hamburg, NY 14075
Speaker: Pastor Anne Cole on Climate Justice

The lives of Janice Beckwith, Evelyn Cole, and Florence Stengel will be remembered. Please call Peggy Bermudez at 626-4897 if you plan to attend.

**CIRCLE NEWS**

**Elizabeth Circle** will meet Thursday, March 1 at 6:30pm at Musicalfare to see “Smokey Joe’s Café.”

**Rachel Circle** will meet Tuesday, March 27 at 12:15 pm in the Wesley Room to make an Easter craft for Beechwood.

**Circle of Joy** will meet on Thursday, March 1 at 7:00 pm. Plans TBD
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**Notes:**
- **April Caller Deadline**
- **Finance Team 7:00p**
- **Hospitality Team 7:00p**
- **SPR Team 7:00p**
- **Music & Meditation 5:30p**
- **Lenten Study 1-2:30p**
- **Books We Have Loved 11:00a**
- **Music & Meditation 5:30p**
- **Elizabeth Circle at Musicalfare 6:30p**
- **Circle of Joy 7:00p**
- **Niagara Frontier District UMW 9:30am**
- **Lenten Study 1-2:30p**
- **Make a Difference Day Planning 11:00a**
- **Outreach Team 7p Trustees 7:30p**
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**Special Days:**
- **Palm Sunday**
- **Good Friday**