

The Visitor

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
September 2016

an invitation to grow in spirit and serve with joy



“Sabbath”

Rev. John L. Kennedy

*Then Jesus said to them,
“The Sabbath was made
to meet the needs of
people, and not people
to meet the require-
ments of the Sabbath.
So the Son of Man is
Lord, even over the
Sabbath!” Mark 2:27*

From August 10 to September 7, my family and I took a time of Sabbath, in this case, *vacation*. For my family and me, the past three years have been like riding a rocketship. Life has been and is moving fast. (I’m sure you know the feeling of “thank G_d it’s Friday”). In fact, this is the first time in three years we have been able to take a vacation of any kind. For

all of us, life often feels like it moves faster than we can manage. The search process for a new church home, moving to a new town (both exciting and exhausting), school activities for our kids, and work hours, etc.—we all needed to refuel. We needed Sabbath!

Vacation was a reality for the Kennedy family this year (thank you, generous and loving friends). We traveled to Anna Maria Island, Florida, for a week. It is a lot of road time, but when we got there, it was worth every mile. Anna Maria Island is a special place to my family. It is a place where my grandfather took us when I was a boy. The last time

we went to Anna Maria was four years ago. Anna Maria is a place of white sand and clear water, and it has no high-rise buildings. It is like going back in time to the old Florida of my youth. It is like going home. My mother and father are seventh-generation Floridians, so Florida is a place where we went often to see my relatives, all of them. It brings back strong memories and emotional imprints—perhaps you have a place like that. Time slows down, and our senses open to God’s wonderful gifts. The sight of the ocean, of crape myrtles, magnolias, palm, and palmetto trees; the smell of the ocean; the taste of salt water. This is a place of Sabbath. (cont. on page 4)



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FRIENDS IN MINISTRY DAY OF HONOR - SEPTEMBER 25

Friends in Ministry is a group of volunteers from within Bethlehem who visit church members in the hospital, in nursing homes, and in their homes.

The group began in 1979 when Orval Willimann was pastor of our congregation. Several of the current members have been visiting Bethlehem members since the group began 37 years ago. All are dedicated members who are an important part of the caring ministry of our church.



On September 25, the Member Care Ministry Team will honor Friends in Ministry during the 10 o'clock church service. Current members are Douglas Cameron, Sharon Edwards, Harriette Ehnis, Mary Friend, Harriett Holzapfel, Vicki Hoxie, Carolyn Moerhle, Paul and Barb Marshall with therapy dog Bella, and Jan Burnham. Evelyn Port sends cards from Women of Bethlehem. We would especially like to honor retiring members Alethea Helbig and Wil Leonard, who have given many years of faithful service.

Friends in Ministry is open to church members of all ages, and we hope there are some who will want to join Friends in Ministry. If you would like a visit or know of someone who would benefit from a visit, please contact the church office at 665-6149.

Jan Burnham, Chair, Member Care Ministry Team

INTERIM MUSIC DIRECTOR

By Harriette Ehnis



On behalf of Pastor John, I am announcing that Paolo Debuque will serve as Interim Music Director at Bethlehem Church from September 1 through January 1. Paolo was interviewed by Pastor John, Carol Leyshock, and myself in July. He was highly recommended by Arianne Abela to fill in during her maternity leave. Reporting to Pastor John, he has accepted all responsibilities as outlined in the Music Director job description.

Paolo is doing graduate work in choral conducting at the University of Michigan. He is looking forward to working with our choir and joining the Worship Ministry Team. Please join me in welcoming Paolo to Bethlehem!

October Visitor deadline



Deadline
to submit
articles and
photos is
September 26

BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104
Phone 734-665-6149 Fax 734-665-3399

www.bethlehem-ucc.org



www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2



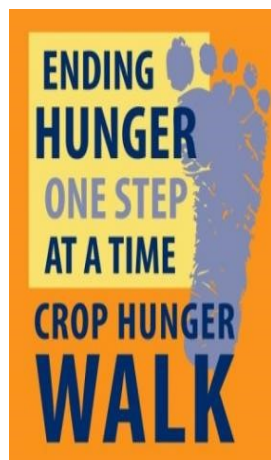
www.pinterest.com/bethlehemucca2



www.youtube.com/user/BethlehemChurchA2

Upcoming Events & Information

Community Outreach Opportunities are detailed on page 9.



2016 CROP WALK
Sunday, Sept. 25

1:00 Registration
2:00 Prayer & Send-off

Trinity Lutheran Church
1400 W. Stadium Blvd.

Be a walker or be a donor.

SIGN UP near the office,
or online at
Bethlehem-ucc.org



IT'S PRETZEL TIME!

Plan now to be a pretzel roller!



PARKING LOT PRETZELS - Sept. 30

Pretzel rolling/baking, 7 am (cleanup at 11 am)
Pretzel sales from 11 am - 2 pm

HOLY ROLLER PRETZELS - Oct. 6

Oct. 6 - rolling 9 am, sales 10:30-12
Oct. 9 (Sunday) - sales at both coffee hours



OKTOBERFEST
October 7, 6-9 p.m.

THIS IS THE START OF OUR HERITAGE WEEKEND!
Join us for a picnic-style dinner of brats, hot dogs, German potato salad, spatzen, sauerkraut, chips, desserts, beer and wine (for sale), coffee, water, and lemonade.

Sign-up sheets are in the office hallway.

Tickets:

\$12/adults

\$5/age 10 and under

Tickets can be purchased at the church office
or reserved by calling 734-665-6149.

WILLIMANN FELLOWSHIP HALL
SPONSORED BY THE FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY TEAM



SAFE CHURCH TRAINING
Sunday, September 18
12-1:30
(lunch provided)

The entire congregation is invited to attend this **Safe Church Policy Training and Review**. We feel it is especially important for all church leaders and children volunteers to attend. Pastor Greg will be leading this training, which will help make our church community as safe and accessible as possible.

FOOTBALL PARKING FUNDRAISER



Parking cars on football Saturdays is the main fundraiser for Bethlehem's Youth Group. Come join the fun & excitement of football Saturdays in Ann Arbor!

3 easy ways to sign up:

- Sign up online at Bethlehem-ucc.org
- Sign-up sheets on the Youth Board (office hallway)
- Call the office at 734-665-6149

2016 FOOTBALL PARKING DATES TO COME:

Sept. 17 & 24; Oct. 1 & 22; Nov. 5 & 19



SAVE THE DATE
FRIDAY,
NOVEMBER 11
FOR BETHLEHEM'S
STAR BAZAAR
AND LUNCHEON!



FLU VACCINATION CLINIC
Sunday, September 18
7:45 a.m. until 10:15 a.m.

(before and after 8:30 service and BEFORE 10:00 service)

****SPECIAL NOTE** DUE TO VACCINE SHIPPING ISSUES THE FLU CLINIC MIGHT NEED TO BE RESCHEDULED. WATCH THE FRIDAY GROUP EMAIL FOR UPDATES.**

- Bring family and friends (18 years & older)
- Bring your Medicare card OR provide \$15 donation
- No one will be turned away.

"Sabbath" Rev. John L. Kennedy
(continued from page 1)

These kinds of places provide Sabbath for us because they open up a space to breath, to disconnect from our planners, cell phones, computers, iPads, and agendas that drive us.

It allows us to see that, compared to the vastness of the ocean, the sand, and the starry night, we and our agendas are small in comparison to God's creation, and that is good news because it helps us to let go and let God be God! When we let God be God (and we don't need to try to be), we discover new creativity, solutions, and clarity.

The Sabbath spaces and times that feed our bodies, minds, and souls are always meant to prepare us to return and reenter community. They help us get back into the dance of life, of trying, caring, healing, and being in community with God leading the way, for life is a partnership with God and one another. I hope you have found Sabbath rest or will soon, and then I hope you return to the dance.

In closing, I leave with you the lyrics of a song that has inspired me.
 Listen on the web if you like:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RV-Z1YwaOiw>

I Hope You Dance

I hope you never lose your sense of wonder
 You get your fill to eat but always keep that hunger
 May you never take one single breath for granted
 God forbid love ever leave you empty handed
 I hope you still feel small when you stand beside the ocean
 Whenever one door closes I hope one more opens
 Promise me that you'll give faith a fighting chance
 And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance
 I hope you dance
 I hope you dance

I hope you never fear those mountains in the distance
 Never settle for the path of least resistance
 Livin' might mean takin' chances, but they're worth takin'
 Lovin' might be a mistake, but it's worth makin'
 Don't let some hell-bent heart leave you bitter
 When you come close to sellin' out, reconsider
 Give the heavens above more than just a passing glance
 And when you get the choice to sit it out or dance
 I hope you dance
 (Time is a wheel in constant motion always rolling us along)
 I hope you dance
 I hope you dance
 (Tell me who wants to look back on their years and wonder)
 I hope you dance
 (Where have those years gone?)

Songwriters: Tia Sillers, Mark Sanders

REST

Allow God to restore, replenish
 and refocus your heart and mind.



**Washtenaw/Ann Arbor
CROP Walk
September 25, 2016**

**Trinity Lutheran Church
1400 West Stadium**

**Registration 1 p.m.
Prayer and send-off 2 p.m.**

CROP Hunger Walk: We need everyone!

CROP stands for Communities Responding to Overcome Poverty.

The walk offers an opportunity to enjoy the company of family, friends, and community members while raising awareness and funds to provide relief and sustainable solutions for hunger at home and abroad.

Walkers can choose between 1-mile and 5-mile routes. A meal will be served following the walk to build community and to celebrate our efforts!

Our team name is *Bethlehem UCC*, and you can join our team by going to the Bethlehem website (bethlehem-ucc.org). Click on *CROP Walk* and sign up and donate online. We also will have a sign-up sheet on the board next to the church office.

Please spread the word and help make this year's walk a success! We look forward to sharing this day with you! Tom Ziesemer and Margy Hunter, Outreach Committee



The CROP Walk raises funds for hunger and poverty relief here and around the world, through Church World Service and its partners (www.cwsglobal.org). In 40 years, it has spanned two generations of walkers and beneficiaries. The CROP Walk is organized by the local Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice. **This year, 25 percent of the funds raised will benefit the following local organizations:**

- ♦ Avalon House
- ♦ Community Action Network
- ♦ Emmanuel House
- ♦ Hope Clinic
- ♦ Growing Hope
- ♦ Packard Health
- ♦ SOS Community Services
- ♦ St. Andrew's Breakfast Program



But I WAAAAAAAAAANT It!!!!

By Pastor Greg Briggs

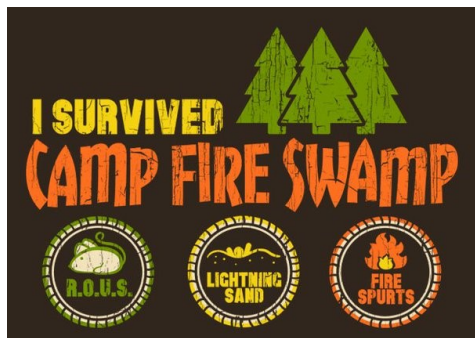
It's always strange when I realize how much I've been conditioned as a consumer. Today is the 50th anniversary of the release of *Star Trek*, and there was an ad posted for a Bluetooth-compatible Next Generation Combadge Microphone: \$80 bucks! But I wanted it so badly. I still do.

Last week, it was a Darth Vader toothpick dispenser that dispensed the toothpick like a light-



saber blade. Also wicked expensive. A while ago, it was a USB charger/cigarette adaptor that was a flux capacitor from *Back to the Future*. Before that, it was a sleeping bag shaped like a Tauntaun from *Star Wars: The Empire Strikes Back*.

I lost this struggle last week. I bought a T-shirt that says, "I Survived Camp Fire Swamp." It shows my love for the movie *The Princess Bride*. I can't wait to get it, wear it, and receive my imagined compliments on it.



I know I'm a science fiction geek, and not everyone can relate to this obsession of mine. Yet almost everyone I know has their similar consumer-based thing. There are sports fanatics, fashionistas, outdoor fanatics, health food nuts, home improvement junkies, hunting enthusiasts, and really

so many other places where people can spend a ridiculous amount of money. If I'm honest, I can't judge their habits without also judging myself. (So often this is where marital or family tension on finances comes from, but that's another essay.)

It's amazing how much I have an overwhelming NEED for these things. I know they are kitsch, I know that the appeal of them will not stand up to my expectations for the product. They won't work nearly as well as I want them to. The toothpick dispenser only holds 10 toothpicks. The USB charger isn't nearly powerful enough to charge my phone. They are overpriced for nostalgic purposes and for what they offer.

Yet isn't that capitalism? Inspiring a burning desire in us for wants that overshadow our needs? This is the insidious nature of the beast. Trying to fill the hole in us that is never satisfied. The urge to buy, to possess, to HAVE, gets at my identity. Though I use many descriptors to identify myself (cis-hetero white male, raised lower middle class, progressive Christian, sci-fi geek, etc.), at this moment, my identity as consumer overrides all else. The voice inside me tells me, "I can't BE a geek if I don't have these things."

No one is forcing me to desire these things. In fact, well-meaning friends share these things as entertainment across Facebook and in private messages. In fact, I sent a similar T-shirt idea to a congregant today. But this desire is not good for me, or the planet. This is what I think of during prayers of confession in worship, when I'm able to be honest with myself. I just looked at my stock of T-shirts, and I have enough to wear a different T-shirt almost every day of the month.

How can I combat this? Not just the thinking-centered, intellectual talkdown (you know you can't afford this; you know it isn't going to be as good as you want it to be, etc.) but the deeper, psychological/spiritual, id-based, primal NEEEEEEEEED of it? I'm reminded of Ephesians 6:12:

"We aren't fighting against human enemies but against rulers, authorities, forces of cosmic darkness, and spiritual powers of evil in the heavens." The struggle is on a level I can't even fully perceive, let alone identify.

I don't have a final answer to this consuming struggle, not yet. I can quote what Jesus said in Matthew 6:19-21, **"Stop collecting treasures for your own benefit on earth, where moth and rust eat them and where thieves break in and steal them. Instead, collect treasures for yourselves in heaven, where moth and rust don't eat them and where thieves don't break in and steal them. Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."** But that doesn't change the desire in me.

I don't share this to make anyone feel guilty or bad about themselves. I share this to say that I imagine many of us are in the same boat. I share this to say this is where I'm weak, and sharing my weakness makes me feel a bit stronger, maybe because I'm no longer struggling with this alone. I share this to say, I know this is one thing I need to improve to make the world a better place. I share this so that it will help free up resources to help those who are in need, and not just in want. Fewer doo-dads require less plastic, which means less oil, which means fewer pipelines, which means cleaner water, and so on...

As tempting as it is to hope one day to win the lottery and be able to afford all the trinkets I want, really that wouldn't help me at all. So I hope and pray for a change in heart, a change in what I desire and crave.

...and for my fellow geeks out there, a moment of honesty. When I described the stuff that I wanted, didn't you WANT them, too?

This was also shared on Pastor Greg's blog page:
<https://pastorgregbriggs.wordpress.com/2016/09/08/but-i-waaaaaaaant-it/>

September Youth Group Activities @ Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Thu. Sept. 1 — **Hanging Out In The Yard** 7—9 p.m. No planning, just relaxing. Last one!

Sat. Sept. 3 — **Football Parking vs. Hawaii** — 9am-noon
 (thanks Vasquez Family!)

Thu. Sept. 8 — **Youth Group—First of the year!** 6:30-8:30pm

Sat. Sept. 10 — **Football Parking vs. Central Florida** — 9am-noon

Sun. Sept. 11 — **Rally Sunday & Blessing of the Backpacks**—10 am worship. Bring school supplies to donate and your backpack to be blessed.

Thu. Sept. 15 — **Youth Group—Pop Culture Focus** 6:30-8:30pm

Sat. Sept. 17 — **Football Parking vs. Colorado** — 10 am-3:30pm

Sun. Sept 18 — **Safe Church Training** — for anyone that works with children or youth. After worship, lunch provided

Thu. Sept. 22 — **Youth Group—Volunteer Night** 5:30-8:30pm
 helping host the College Student Welcome Dinner

Sat. Sept. 24 — **Football Parking vs. Penn State** — time TBA

Sun. Sept 25—**CROP Walk!** - 1 pm Registration, 2 pm walk

Thu. Sept. 29— **Youth Group—Maker Night** 6:30-8:30pm

MS & HS Youth Activities

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sat. Oct. 1 — **Football Parking vs. Penn State**

Oct. 7-8 — **Lock In**

All Hallows Eve Event

Unless otherwise noted, all youth group activities are open to grades 6-12. Whether you come to church every week, or are only interested in one of our activities, U. R. ALWAYS WELCOME to join us - NO EXCEPTIONS!

For more information on any youth activity, or to RSVP, go to the youth bulletin board, the church website, mesaage Pastor Greg at greg@bethlehem-ucc.org \ 616-283-2971



Bethlehem United Church of Christ

October 7 6-9:00 pm

Food Line 6:00-8:00 pm

Adults: \$12 Children: 10 and under \$5

German Sausage or Hog Dog, German Potato Salad,
Spatzen, Sauerkraut, Chips, Dessert,
Coffee, Tea, Lemonade

*Tickets can be purchased at the
Church Office/Coffee Hours on Sundays*

Cash Bar: Beer, Wine, German Pretzels

Live Music by Stevie D & the Wannabes!

OKTOBERFEST

October 7

Hope to see you there!

Bethlehem's first Oktoberfest Picnic is just around the corner. We believe everyone will have a wonderful time on October 7.

To make the evening enjoyable for all, we hope you will sign up for one of the tasks on the bulletin board outside the office. This way you can help out and eat with your family and friends as well.

Tickets have already gone on sale, but remember, if you take a packet of eight and know that your party will arrive at the same time, you may reserve a table.

Jane Ziesemer
Chair of Fellowship Ministries

Bethlehem Veterans' Monthly Luncheon

October 7, 2016

8:30 a.m.

Classic Cup Café on Jackson Rd.

A luncheon for our veterans will be held on the first Friday of every month, beginning in October, at the Classic Cup Café.

This luncheon is open to all of our Bethlehem vets. If you would like to bring a friend (fellow vet), please let me know so we have a proper head count.

Hope to see you there! Tom Ziesemer (ziesemertn@gmail.com 734-663-0378)





Bethlehem Church Ongoing Outreach Opportunities

Please consider joining in!
Sign-up sheets are in the office hallway.

ALPHA HOUSE OUTREACH

October 2, 5:30 and 6:45

Volunteers make dinner and help with activities for families using Alpha House for temporary shelter, food, and support services. Email Stacey Stites at rickandstace@comcast.net to help.

5:30 - Dinner

6:45 - After-dinner kids' activities

FOOD GATHERERS COMMUNITY KITCHEN

October 2 (first Sunday of each month)

Please sign up in the office hallway. Cook 12-2:30, Clean 2:30-5

PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER (111 N. Maple Rd.)

September 27 (fourth Tuesday of each month, 2:30—4:45 pm)

After-School Program to serve nutritious snacks to school children, prior to their tutoring.

Sign-up is located on the bulletin board by the office.

PLUS Fresh Food Distribution Fridays, 9-12. Please join us.

2016-17 OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES



AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Volunteers are needed on the 4th Tuesday of September through May to serve elementary school children nutritional snacks before going into a tutoring program.

Commitment is 2:30-4:45 pm

Please sign up on bulletin board by Office

Peace Neighborhood Center 1111 N. Maple Road
Ann Arbor 48103

Questions? Contact Sue Muir at
suemuir@comcast.net or 734-761-9795

FRIDAY FRESH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

September through May, volunteers are needed on Fridays to help sort and then distribute fresh produce, provided by Food Gatherers, to families eligible to take part in this program.

Commitment: Any time between 9am-12:00noon It's not necessary to sign up....just come when you can!

This also takes place at Peace Neighborhood Center



MEMORIALS & GIFTS

CHURCH SCHOOL FUND

Lois Haeussler Memorial
Sable Marshall Memorial

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE KITS

David Fisher 60th Birthday Memorial

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Theresa Schmale 93rd Birthday Honorarium

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Lois Haeussler Memorial

RADIO FUND

Lois Haeussler Memorial

Gifts listed were received through
August 31, 2016

RADIO MINISTRY SPONSORSHIPS

- August 7** In memory of Frederick and Lela Keppler from their children.
- August 21** Sponsored by Mary Jean Raab in memory of Lorena Stein.
- August 28** In honor of Becky Kirby for her birthday today, August 28, from her grandmother, Alethea Helbig.

AUGUST FINANCIALS 2016

Monthly Target	\$30,625.00
Received	\$20,879.00
YTD Target	\$245,000.00
YTD Received	\$224,384.00
Difference	(\$20,616.00)

Wonderful News!



Arianne Abela, our Director of Music, gave birth to a beautiful baby girl, **Hazel Abela Horn**, born September 5. Congratulations, Arianne and Noah!

Their new address is:

Arianne Abela, Noah Horn, and Hazel
3500 East Jefferson Avenue, Apt. 413
Detroit, MI 48207

COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS

Congratulations to the 2016-2017 Bethlehem United Church of Christ McKay Scholarship Recipients

Caroline Elliott	University of Edinburgh
Misty Fisher	Monroe County Comm. College
David Foster	Alma College
Erin Foster	Calvin College
Lauren Hunter	Bryn Mawr College
Jessica Joslin	University of Michigan
Brandon Kinsman	Washtenaw Comm. College
Christian Moehrle	Marshall University
Caroline Papin	Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
Adrienne Paton	Virginia Tech
Rachel Schenk	Michigan State University
Clark Sprague	Michigan Technological Univ.
Jennifer Steinaway	Grand Valley State University
Sydney Stites	Grand Valley State University
Tyler Tribble	Miami University
Caroline Wright	University of Michigan
Robert Wright	Kalamazoo College



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE



CHURCH WORLD SERVICE KITS

We Are Collecting Now for Our October Shipment

Bethlehem continues to collect kit items, assemble kits, and ship them to Church World Service for world-wide distribution. Please bring items to the church library and put in the box labeled Church World Service.

Below are some of our most needed items to complete our school and health kits:

1. spiral notebooks (must be 70-sheet style)
2. 24-count packages of crayons
3. health kits
4. regular-size Band-Aids
5. nail clippers
6. regular-size bars of soap
7. washcloths
8. hand towels

*Thank you!
We could not do this
outreach without you!*

3 easy ways to support Bethlehem. All you have to do is shop!

**Support Bethlehem through these
Community Rewards Programs**

Kroger

Busch's

amazonsmile

- For Kroger rewards, go to Kroger.com, click "Sign In," and follow the directions.
- For Busch's rewards, go to buschs.com, go to your MyWay account, and click the Cash for Education icon.
- For Amazon rewards, shop at smile.amazon.com (see info at right)
- See *Bethlehem-ucc.org* for complete information

Welcome to
amazonsmile

You shop. Amazon gives.

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to **Bethlehem United Church of Christ** whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.

You can select a different charitable organization after signing in.

- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support your charitable organization by starting your shopping at **smile.amazon.com**

Covenant of Welcome

We, at Bethlehem United Church of Christ, declare ourselves an
Open and Affirming congregation where we celebrate Christ's extravagant love.
We covenant with God and one another to welcome the diverse tapestry of all people,
no matter their age, race, nationality, ethnicity,
economic circumstance, marital or family status, physical or mental ability,
sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.
We invite everyone—believers and questioners, seekers and skeptics—
to share their gifts in the life, leadership, ministry, fellowship, worship,
sacraments, responsibilities, and blessings of our congregation.



Bethlehem's Ministry Team

Rev. John Kennedy	Pastor
Rev. Greg Briggs	Associate Pastor
Rev. Orval L.E. Willimann	Pastor Emeritus
Carol Leyshock	Parish Administrator
Betty Clark	Financial Administrator
Donna Whitney	Office Support Specialist
Arianne Abela	Director of Music
Paolo Debuque	Interim Director of Music
Gail Jennings	Organist
Jim Rowan	Director of Handbells

The *Visitor*
is printed 12 times a year

Our Mission

To worship God,
To learn and live the
Word of God,
To engage in Christian
fellowship and service,
To invite others to join us
on our faith journey in the
ministry of Jesus Christ.