



# The Visitor

March 2018

Bethlehem  
United Church of Christ

## Lent

Lily Tinker Fortel

Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

A few Sundays ago, I asked the children who came up for the Children's Message what they know about Lent. I jokingly interrupted their thoughts: "It's the stuff we clean out of the dryer screen, right?!" At the moment, I only brought that up as a play on words - a joke that I hoped the kids would find funny. Still, as I've pondered the meaning and significance of Lent, I think there might be something more to the connection. Perhaps Lent is a time for clearing away the metaphorical "lint" from our lives and getting back to the basics of our spiritual journeys.

Lent is the season between Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. It is a time of preparation for Easter. I think it is also a time of preparation for the journey beyond Easter - the lifelong journey of building "Heaven on Earth."

Many Christians choose to journey through Lent with a variety of spiritual practices, including fasting, adding practices such as a daily devotional, or increasing acts of kindness toward neighbors. Whether or not we have chosen to mark Lent with specific spiritual practices, I hope we all will find opportunities in this final month of Lent to peel away the metaphorical dirt and clutter in our lives and get "back to the basics."

Walking the road of love and justice with Jesus isn't always easy in a world where there is so much pain and oppression. Jesus knew that; the disciples knew too. This Lent, I hope our hearts will be opened to the glimpses of wonder and light of the divine that is all around us. I hope we will find rest and joy in those wonders. I hope we will find ourselves re-committed to the active work of being Love in the world - to following the example of Jesus and building a "Just World for All." May this Lent bring renewed vitality to our individual spiritual lives and to our spiritual community here at Bethlehem Church. It is a joy to walk with you!

### April Submission Deadline

Articles and photos need to be submitted by Tuesday, April 3 in order to be published in the April 8 Visitor.

*This is the week  
AFTER Easter  
so I am hoping for lots of  
Easter and Holy Week photos.*

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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](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org)  
[www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2](https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2)

## STEPHEN MINISTER COMMISSIONING



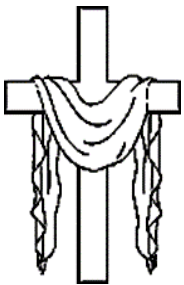
### STEPHEN MINISTRY

**Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest.**

*Matthew 11:28*

We are thrilled to announce that our Stephen Ministers are nearing the completion of their 50-hour training! Congratulations to Liechen Escott, Vicki Hoxie, Eileen Koprowski, and Jane Schmerberg as well as Bethlehem's Stephen Leaders, Pastor John Kennedy, Kurt Schmerberg, and Lily Tinker Fortel on this important milestone!

We will commission Bethlehem's first cohort of Stephen Ministers on Sunday, March 11 during the 10:00 a.m. service.

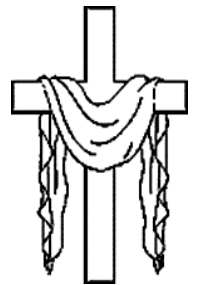


## 12-HOUR PRAYER VIGIL AT BETHLEHEM

Please sign up next to the office for our Good Friday Prayer Vigil  
March 30 from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. in the chapel

***Come find the quiet center.***

Questions? Contact Harriette Ehnis (hehnis@att.net)



## The Ted DeGrazia exhibit, "The Way of the Cross"

This glorious exhibit will again be on display from Maundy Thursday through Easter, thanks to the generosity of Mike and Harriette Ehnis. **Please see page 10 for more details.**



## YOUTH MISSION LENTEN PROJECT Ruth Ellis Center

Please bring non-perishable foods to our  
**COLLECTION BOX** in the Bethlehem Library.

We are continuing our efforts to help the Ruth Ellis Center who serves marginalized and homeless youth. During lent we are collecting non-perishable food items.

*The center creates "Grab-n-Go" packs of food.  
For some, this may be the only food that they get.*

All foods need to be in individualized packets that can be easily used. They especially want some foods that can serve as a meal, like easy-open mac-n-cheese, soups or cans of tuna. Please help us fill our boxes. **Thank you!**





## EASTER FLOWERS & BETHLEHEM GIFTS SIGN UP TODAY BY THE CHURCH OFFICE

Deadline is March 15

The time is here to order Easter flowers or donate towards a Bethlehem Ministry of your choice, in honor or memory of a loved one.

The flowers will be display on the altar on Easter and then can be taken home after the service.

A list of the memorials and honorariums will be printed in the Easter bulletin and the next Visitor.

*Order sheets and envelopes are on the bulletin board next to the church office. Thank you!*

## Palm Sunday Potluck Brunch



**MARCH 25  
FOLLOWING THE  
10:00 AM WORSHIP  
SERVICE**

**Please sign up outside the church office  
for food for the brunch.**

*If you are providing a casserole or side dish,  
please have them already cooked or baked.*

All proceeds will go to the  
Education Ministry Team's Lenten Project:  
**Ruth Ellis Center for marginalized youth.**

*Questions? Contact Jane Ziesemer ziesemerj@gmail.com.*



## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

### March 25 **PALM SUNDAY**

#### Worship Services

8:30 and 10:00 a.m.

**Palm Sunday brunch**  
after the 10:00 service

### March 29 **MAUNDY THURSDAY**

**Worship Service, 7 p.m.**

#### Stations of the Cross

Lounge, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
6 p.m. - 9 p.m.

### March 30 **GOOD FRIDAY**

**Prayer Vigil, 7 a.m.-7 p.m.**

#### Good Friday Service

12 p.m., chapel

#### Good Friday Service

7 p.m., sanctuary

### April 1 **EASTER SUNDAY**



**Sunrise Service, 7 a.m.,**  
Bethlehem Cemetery

**Worship Service, 10 a.m.**  
Bethlehem Sanctuary

#### PALM SUNDAY BRUNCH - Sunday, March 25

Palm Sunday, March 25, will be here before you know it and you don't want to miss our brunch following the 10:00 service, sponsored by Fellowship Ministries.

If you are an 8:30 worshiper we would love to have you come back. This is a potluck so please sign up on the sheets outside the office.

There will be simple table games for all ages such as a Word Search, while you enjoy brunch. A free will offering will go towards supporting the Ruth Ellis Center for marginalized youth.



## ONA PRESENTATION Thank you!

Many thanks to all the folks who braved the snow storm on February 11 and stayed after church for Ben Hollenbach's discussion on LGBTQ inclusion at church and in the wider community.

We are very blessed to have Ben helping us out with this important ministry at Bethlehem.



*Members of the ONA Standing Committee after a recent congregational discussion on what it means to be an inclusive church.*

*Kurt Schmerberg,  
Jane Schmerberg,  
Sue Wortman,  
Mary Jean Raab,  
Nancy Nicholson,  
Jennifer Vasquez,  
Ben Hollenbach*



## RADIO BROADCAST SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP

Please remember that a lot of folks count on the weekly  
Radio Broadcast of our 10 o'clock Service.

This program is funded by weekly radio sponsorships,  
memorials, and special donations.



*Have you sponsored a Radio Broadcast lately? Are you looking for a way to honor or remember a friend or family member? A weekly Radio Sponsorship is \$230. In addition, general donations of any amount are appreciated. Thank you for supporting this important ministry!*

1. Pick a date you want to sponsor.
2. Sign up on the bulletin board in the office hallway, or call the office at **734-665-6149**.
3. You can even donate online at **[bethlehem-ucc.org](http://bethlehem-ucc.org)**
4. Tell the office how you want your sponsorship listed in the bulletin and read on-air.

## AUDIVI - In concert at Bethlehem

### RISE UP, MY LOVE

featuring David Lang's the little match girl passion

Sat., March 17, 7:30 p.m. Bethlehem UCC

Audivi.net for tickets and info.



Audivi is a professional vocal ensemble based in Detroit. It was founded in 2013 by Noah Horn (Arianne's husband), Director of Choral Programs at Wayne State University.

## FROM THE CEMETERY BOARD

Winter is still with us and will be for a while yet but at the cemetery plans are being made for spring. Because Easter is early this year all winter holiday decorations need to be removed before the end of March. If you have placed a wreath, grave blanket or other winter decoration on the grave of a loved one please dispose of it **by March 20**. Any items left after March 20 will be discarded by the Sexton.



A new section of the cemetery will be laid out this spring. After all the burial plots are identified, new trees will be planted. Arbor Day is in April. If you are looking for a way to honor loved ones why not consider donating funds for a tree in their honor? A member of the Board can assist you in the selection and planting of a tree.

Please remember no bushes, shrubs, trees, etc., are to be planted in Bethlehem Cemetery without the approval of the Board. Any plants not approved will be removed at the discretion the Sexton.

## News from the Washtenaw Interfaith Round Table

### Reaching Across Differences: Conversations that Matter in Today's World

*(By popular request, we offer this course again.)*

*The political storm that has visited the United States over the past few years have exposed a number of social crises. One of these crises is our society's ongoing struggle to truly hear each other and to help each other discern what sits at the heart of our beliefs, our fears and our desires for a wholesome life. What are some deep listening and inquiry practices that can bring us closer together rather than further apart?*



The IRT invites you to come explore and practice conversations that will expand our ability to listen more deeply and discover what truly matters at the core of any conversation. How can we reflect each other's sacredness in ways that can help each of us see our true beauty and each other's heart's desire to thrive and live a blessed life?

- ◆ **Date and Time:** Tuesday April 3, 10, 17, 24. 7-9 p.m.
- ◆ **Themes:** Four core attributes (trust, hope, love and clarity/light)
- ◆ **Approach:** Self-examination, small and large group discussion (all materials provided)
- ◆ **Location:** Lord of Light Luther Campus Ministry, 801 S. Forest, Ann Arbor
- ◆ **Facilitator:** Rev. Susan King, IRT Co-Director
- ◆ **Cost:** \$40 (includes all materials) **Talk to Lily about Bethlehem covering your costs.**
- ◆ **Reservations:** Reserve a place by registering via email at [gbrides@umich.edu](mailto:gbrides@umich.edu)

Some have asked, "How do I talk with people who see life from such a different place from what I see it?" Others have said, "I just want to be a better listener." And still others wonder, "Are there better ways to connect with those who don't think like me, look like me or practice like me?" For all of the above, this course is just right for you. [Irtwc.org/reaching-across-differences-conversations-matter-todays-world](http://Irtwc.org/reaching-across-differences-conversations-matter-todays-world) for more info.



# Spiritual Growth and Development

## February Highlights

Lily Tinker Fortel

### Lenten Devotional

We distributed  
20 copies of the  
Lovers and Fools  
2018 Lent  
Devotional  
from the UCC  
Stillspeaking  
Writers' Group.



### Family Fun Night

Thanks to all who came out to our  
February Family Fun night!!  
We watched *Finding Nemo* and made  
blue ocean glitter slime!

**All Bethlehem members are invited our  
March Friday Fun Night  
Friday, March 23 from 6:00-8:30 p.m.**



### Youth Group

Good food (thanks to families who are bringing meals),  
meaningful discussions and lots of board games!



### Help with Youth Group Meals

Do you love to cook? Do you love Bethlehem's Youth?  
This is a great opportunity to help us out! Call the  
office at 734-665-6149 or email Lily at  
[lily@bethlehem-ucc.org](mailto:lily@bethlehem-ucc.org) or  
sign up outside of the church office.



# Spiritual Growth and Development

## Looking Forward

Lily Tinker Fortel

### UPCOMING EVENTS - HERE AT BETHLEHEM

- Thursday, March 1** Bethlehem Prayer Circle - 11:30 a.m. - Lounge
- Sunday, March 4** Initial Habitat Planning Meeting - 11:00 a.m. - Fellowship Hall
- Thursday, March 8** Youth Group Outing to Whitney Farmstead - Maple Syrup!
- Sunday, March 11** Stephen Minister Commissioning during 10:00 a.m. Service
- Thursday, March 15** Bethlehem Prayer Circle - 11:30 a.m. - Lounge
- Sunday, March 18** Bethlehem Outing: A Wrinkle in Time. Sign up on bulletin board, or fill out this form by 3/14:

[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdVLrjDmOi1DDzRqAmduKZsPQ8Po8fW5WDMITQYGdUGKUTwjA/viewform?usp=sf\\_link](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdVLrjDmOi1DDzRqAmduKZsPQ8Po8fW5WDMITQYGdUGKUTwjA/viewform?usp=sf_link)

- Thursday, March 22** March for Our Lives poster making with Youth Group  
6:30-8:30 p.m. Youth Room
- Friday, March 23** Family Fun Night at Bethlehem - 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. - Theater Room
- Saturday, March 24** March for Our Lives; Time and Location TBD
- Sunday, March 25** Procession of the Palms during Palm Sunday Worship  
Children and youth gather at back of sanctuary at 9:50 a.m.
- Sunday, March 25** Palm Sunday Brunch - with children's activities.
- Thursday, March 29** Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 p.m.  
(This is the Youth Group activity for 3/29)
- Friday, March 30** Good Friday Vigil 7:00 a.m.- 7:00 p.m. - Chapel  
Good Friday Services at 12:00 noon and 7:00 p.m.
- Sunday, April 1** Easter Sunday  
7:00 a.m. Sunrise Service at the Bethlehem Cemetery  
10:00 a.m. Easter Service, sanctuary



### UPCOMING EVENTS IN THE COMMUNITY

- Saturday, March 10** Interfaith Council for Peace and Justice Connect and Act Conference  
[www.eventbrite.com/e/connect-act-2018-tickets-42183085745](http://www.eventbrite.com/e/connect-act-2018-tickets-42183085745)
- Sunday, March 24** March for Our Lives - Bethlehem community marches to support students standing up for Gun Control.  
Time/Location TBD. Poster making on Thursday, 3/22 at 6:30 p.m.
- Tuesday, April 3, 10, 17, 24 (see page 5 for details)**  
Interfaith Round Table - April Discussion Series, 7-9 p.m.

## MEMORIALS & GIFTS

### GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Waldemar Pollee & Marianna Pollee Memorial

### MUSIC/CHOIR FUND

Shirley Ann Hoskin Memorial

### PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Wilbert & Betty Diuble Memorial

John O'Reilly Memorial

Joseph, Laura & John O'Reilly Memorial

Gifts listed were received through  
February 28, 2018

### RADIO BROADCAST SPONSORSHIP

The February 18 Radio Broadcast was sponsored by **Barbara Scherdt Hoppe and Karen Scherdt Moore**, in memory of their parents and grandparents **Stanley & Betty Scherdt, Erwin & Lucille Scherdt**, and **Edward & Lenore Scherdt**.

## PARISH RECORDS

### MEMBER DEATHS

**Alfred "Fritz" Rentschler**

Died on February 25, 2015

### FUNERALS HELD AT BETHLEHEM

**Jackie Opperman**

(Sister-in-law of Judy Coucouvanis)

Died on January 7, 2018

**Shirley Ann Hoskin**

(Mother of Nancy Pieske)

Died on February 16, 2018



# Thank you, Thank you, Thank you.

*Thanks for all  
the prayers  
and cards.  
God Bless.  
Now it is  
rest and rest  
(for us).*

**Love, Jane and  
John Schneider**

*Steve and I want to thank everyone at  
BUCC for your prayers and support for  
Steves 2 surgeries for the cancer in  
and around his eyes. They went well  
(due to the many prayers). He will be  
going through several weeks of radia-  
tion and chemo soon. Thank you for  
your continued support and prayers.*

**You are the best! Gert Eisele.**

*A note to say thank you for your prayers  
and cards for Kenneyon. He is home now  
with home health care for the next few  
weeks and is doing well. Prayers and  
modern medicine together - great com-  
bination. God is good. We remember  
Pastor John with our prayers for healing  
and for him to return. He is missed.*

**Thank you again. Violet Edwards.**



**ELECTRONIC  
GIVING**

### ELECTRONIC GIVING OPTIONS AT BETHLEHEM CHURCH

**Thank you for pledging your support to Bethlehem UCC for 2018.**

You can now make your contributions online (one-time, weekly, or monthly), or you can sign up to have your donations automatically deducted from your bank or credit card. Go to [Bethlehem-ucc.org](http://Bethlehem-ucc.org) and click on DONATIONS to access the Online Giving option or the Direct Payment Authorization form.

January 2018	Year to Date	YTD Target	2018 Budget
<b>Offerings &amp; Income</b>	\$33,503	\$37,227	\$446,732
<b>Expenses</b>	\$54,446	\$44,788	\$537,454
<b>Net</b>	(\$20,943)	( \$7560)	(\$90,722)





## Bethlehem's Tree of Life

If you are looking for a personal and meaningful gift for a special occasion or person(s), please consider the purchase of a leaf on our Tree of Life. The Tree of Life is located in the lobby of the 4th Avenue canopy entrance of Bethlehem.

Your leaf will commemorate what is important in your life and the lives of those you love and care about. It will also create a history of our times together here at Bethlehem and help to fund special projects and needs.

Order forms are available in the church office; at the 4th Avenue Welcome Center; or by emailing [info@bethlehem-ucc.org](mailto:info@bethlehem-ucc.org)

## Upcoming events not listed elsewhere in the Visitor

### AUXILIARY/MOTHERS' STUDY

Wednesday, March 21, 1 p.m., gallery

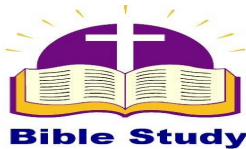
Please join us for refreshments and enjoy an afternoon concert by our own Katie Rowan.



### Bethlehem Veterans' Monthly Breakfast



April 6  
8:30 a.m.  
Classic Cup  
Café  
Jackson Rd.



### MARY MARTHA BIBLE STUDY

Tuesday, March 13  
(2nd Tuesday of each month)  
10:00 a.m. in the library



### MARCH PRETZEL SCHEDULE

Call 734-665-6149 to preorder.

**HOLY ROLLERS:** Saturday, March 17  
Pretzel rolling begins at 8 a.m., sales from 10:30–12

**PARKING LOT PRETZELS:** Friday, March 23  
Pretzel rolling begins at 7 a.m., sales from 11–1



### FRESH PRODUCE COLLECTION

MARCH 18

(every third Sunday until spring)

Please bring your  
donations of fresh produce  
and place them on the  
altar at either service.



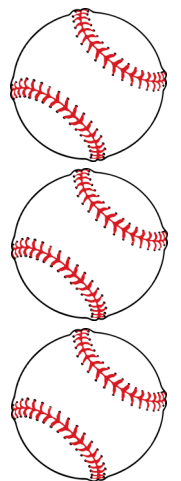
## Planning Ahead for Summer!

### 2018 Bethlehem Church Tigers Outing - July 29

We have a block of excellent seats reserved for Sunday, July 29 Tigers game against the Cleveland Indians. Scheduled game time is 1:10 p.m. We plan to depart from the church following the 10:00 a.m. worship and return to Bethlehem right after the game.

Your \$45 ticket gets you a ride to and from Comerica Park in a luxury coach, your game ticket, lunch and beverages aboard the bus on the way to the game, other special items, and fantastic fellowship.

Contact Brian Paton to make your reservation, [bapaton@hotmail.com](mailto:bapaton@hotmail.com) 734-635-9204.  
We have one bus with 52 available seats; your payment reserves your seat.





**The Ted DeGrazia exhibit, "The Way of the Cross,"**  
will again be available for your viewing  
in the Schmale Lounge.

All fifteen stations will be displayed for your  
thoughtful meditation and consideration.

DeGrazia, a well-known Tucson artist,  
was commissioned to do these paintings,  
and Bethlehem Church is very fortunate to have these prints.

***Come by and experience this  
wonderful Holy Week display.  
Open during office hours and also  
before and after evening worship services  
beginning Maundy Thursday.***

## Volunteer Opportunities with IHN Alpha House

Laura Seyfried, Outreach Ministry Team chairperson

Alpha House is one of the local outreach programs that Bethlehem volunteers at.  
Although our next dinner/activities volunteer day will not be until June . .  
**there are still PLENTY of other opportunities.**

Not interested in cooking or serving food? Childcare not your thing?  
IHN Alpha House has other needs you may be able to help with:

- Redecorating or remodeling? Gently used furniture is needed for families moving out of temporary housing at Alpha House and into their own rental homes.
- Do you drive a truck? Alpha House is putting together a list of volunteers with trucks who are able to assist families with moving their furnishings into their new homes.
- Do you own a home in Washtenaw County that you are thinking of converting to a rental property? The Rapid Rehousing program at Alpha House is looking to partner with more local property owners to increase the number of available rental homes for their temporary residents to move into.
- For more information about these opportunities, please contact IHN Alpha House directly at:  
(734) 822-0220 - 4290 Jackson Rd. Ann Arbor, MI 48103 - [alphahouse-ihn.org](http://alphahouse-ihn.org)



**Our mission is to end family homelessness in Washtenaw County.**

We provide temporary shelter, food, and support services in a caring atmosphere of dignity and safety. More than providing just a bed and a roof for families, our goal is to support the families in securing and maintaining their own home.

BETHELEHM UCC

MARCH 2018

# Outreach Ministry

Service is a community-wide reality at Bethlehem UCC!



**Reaching Out** to our members, community, country, and the world through support and service is one of Bethlehem's Core Values. Bethlehem is an active church that reaches out to the community in a spirit of love, justice, and fellowship. The Outreach Ministry Team supports the congregation in fulfilling this Christian responsibility.

**JOIN US!** Contact information at <https://bethlehem-ucc.org/outreach/>

1

## ALPHA HOUSE/IHN

Prepare and serve dinner for families at Alpha House; stay for the fun kid's activities

2

## FOOD GATHERERS

Prepare meals at the Community Kitchen; donate fresh produce and non-perishables

3

## PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Serve after school snacks; distribute fresh produce



### Upcoming Opportunities

June 7  
August 9  
October 7



### Upcoming Opportunities

March 4  
April 1  
May 6



### Upcoming Opportunities

March 27  
April 24  
May 22





### ***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 Church—Our Core Values**

- ♦ **Growing** spiritually in our faith journey together
- ♦ **Worshipping** together to seek and share God's love
- ♦ **Connecting** with God and each other in a supportive, nurturing way
- ♦ **Reaching out** to our members, community, country, and the world through support and service

### **Bethlehem's Ministry Team**

Rev. John Kennedy

Pastor

Rev. Orval L.E. Willimann

Pastor Emeritus

Lily Tinker Fortel

Minister of Spiritual Growth  
and Development

Carol Leyshock

Parish Administrator

Betty Clark

Financial Administrator

Donna Whitney

Parish Secretary

Thomas Burton

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.