

BETHLEHEM

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



ANNUAL REPORT

2017

**BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
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BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN

MISSION STATEMENT

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

COVENANT OF WELCOME

APPROVED MAY 22, 2016

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.

CHURCH STAFF

DECEMBER 31, 2017

Rev. John L. Kennedy	Pastor
Dr. 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
James Rowan	Director of Handbells

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL AND ELECTED MEMBERS OF MINISTRY TEAMS, BOARDS, AND COMMITTEES

DECEMBER 31, 2017

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

Sue Buday	President
Ron Dechert	Vice President
Karen Samford	Secretary
Shannon O'Reilly	Treasurer
Judy Coucouvanis	Member at Large
Kris Lovelace	Member at Large
Sue Wortman	Member at Large

FINANCE MINISTRY TEAM

Jeff Wortman	Chair
Ken Tappe	Elected Member

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM

Steve Darr	Chair
Tom Ziesemer	Elected Member
John Irwin	Elected Member

OTHER MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRS

Jane Nicholson Schmerberg	Education
Caroline Ashenfelter	Worship
Jan Burnham	Member Care
Kurt Schmerberg	Welcome
Laura Seyfried	Outreach
Jane Ziesemer	Fellowship

BETHLEHEM CEMETERY BOARD

Marilyn Pearson	President
Sue Irwin	Vice President
Sallie Stadel	Secretary
Mike Haab	Treasurer
Jim Goforth	Member at Large
Jim Lutz	Member at Large

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

Della DiPietro	Chair
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PASTOR'S ANNUAL REPORT

Rev. John Kennedy

Jesus replied, "Now the time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory. I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat is planted in the soil and dies, it remains alone. But its death will produce many new kernels—a plentiful harvest of new lives. Those who love their life in this world will lose it. Those who care nothing for their life in this world will keep it for eternity. Anyone who wants to serve me must follow me, because my servants must be where I am. And God will honor anyone who serves me.

—John 12:23-26

In the pages of Bethlehem UCC's 2017 Annual Report, we see the "footprints" of the Holy Spirit moving among us. Each ministry team's report is a testimony to what the Holy Spirit has been up to through us. We are told in Ephesians that the Holy Spirit leaves these kinds of footprints or fruits in our lives: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. But before these fruits can grow, the seeds of our minds and hearts must soften, stretch, and literally burst open to allow the new growth to spring forth. The harder and more resistant the seed is, the longer and more painful the growth process can feel. But once new growth has burst forth, it can never be contained or go back into the shell of the seed. Sometimes, staying in our hard shell feels safer, sometimes we even scream with agony, "Leave me alone. I like it in my shell!" But God creates all life, cocoons, and seeds, and God always has a purpose bigger than the individual seed or life. God calls us to break out of our well-upholstered seeds, cocoons, and tombs and says, "Grow, stretch, spread your leaves, and reach for the sun, and spread your wings and fly!" This report is testimony to a people who are springing forth into new growth and flight, thanks be to God!

I want to thank all of you in our Bethlehem Family for making our congregation a place where growth is possible because it is safe, welcoming, caring, faithful, loving, warm, risk taking, and spiritually focused. In 2017, we continued to step out in faith, and in doing so, God is blessing us. Bethlehem did important spiritual work in 2017. The work that you have done has been challenging, sacrificial, and brave. The fruits of our labor are just beginning to sprout and break the surface. When a farmer plants the seed of the desired crop, it goes through many changes. The seed goes through stress. It is forced open by the new life, and it then begins to grow roots. So far, much of our growth has been establishing firm roots. With prayer, love, a clear vision, a focused mission, and strategies to grow and tend the vision, we are going from just sprouting to growing.

Thank you to Sue Buday and the members of our Leadership Council who have worked, prayed, and discerned to provide leadership that helps guide Bethlehem into a bright and meaningful future. Sue, thank you for your courage—you will be missed. Welcome to John Samford, our new president. Thank you to Karen Samford for being our secretary. Our loss is the Finance team's gain.

I am grateful to God; to the members of our Welcome, ONA, Fellowship, Member Care, Education, Worship, Outreach, Facilities, and Finance teams; to Bethlehem's executive board,

the Leadership Council; and to each of you for loving even when it feels risky. We have been choosing love over fear. It has been the right thing to do, and for all the right Gospel reasons. Our choices brought new, younger faces and members to Bethlehem in 2017. We are thankful to God, and to the new members of our church family, thank you, too:

Dennis & Carol Durnwald

Eileen Koprowski

Lily Tinker Fortel

Scott Buday & Jenell Buday and their children, Sophia and Kai

Christina Wilk & Thomas Krell and their son, Logan Wilk-Krell

We thank and praise God, in advance, for we know more beautiful lives will become a part of the mission and ministry of Bethlehem UCC in 2018.

We also acknowledge that during 2017 we experienced the loss and death of many longtime Bethlehem members. We celebrate their lives! We will continue to remember that their lives touched ours and remember that in your love they will live forever.

Thank you to our ONA Standing Committee for continuing its work so that we at Bethlehem will continue to live out God's extravagant love and our Covenant of Welcome to all who walk through our doors.

Thank you to Kurt Schmerberg and our Welcome Ministry for working to project our welcoming message to our community. In 2017, we saw the development of our new webpage with the help of John & Karen Samford and Donna Whitney. New awnings were installed at the 5th Avenue and S. 4th Avenue doors. The awnings have a message that reads, "A Just World for All," and the 4th Avenue canopy has the colors of the rainbow to indicate our status as an official ONA congregation. We have also installed an aluminum plaque on the 4th Avenue exterior that shows our ONA Covenant of Welcome and banners throughout the interior of our building and sanctuary.

Thank you to Jane Ziesemer and our Fellowship Ministry for hosting numerous events over food, drink, and fellowship. Jesus accomplished so much over food, and I know the hard work invested in our times of fellowship has touched our lives and nurtured community.

Thank you to Caroline Ashenfelter and our Worship Ministry Team for creating beautiful and meaningful worship experiences. So much creative effort goes into our worship and special liturgical seasons, such as, Advent, Christmas, Lent, Easter, and Pentecost. Thank you to Gail Jennings, Jim Rowan, and Arianne Abela for your leadership and music.

Thank you to Donna Whitney and Patti Maki for your tireless work on the Sunday bulletins, the *Visitor* newsletter, and so many other tasks. Thank you to our office volunteers under the direction of Carol Leyshock for your work and for being a welcoming face to all who interact with our church.

Thank you to Lily Tinker Fortel, who became our Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development in April 2017. Lily is full of creative ideas, energy, and spiritually grounded leadership that seeks

to reach out into our community. She has already provided spiritual growth opportunities for people of all ages. We are grateful that our nursery is now staffed with a loving and dependable teacher, Kelsey Postler.

Thank you to Laura Seyfried and our Outreach Ministry. Laura has helped rebuild and reenergize our Outreach efforts. The team went from only 1 or 2 attendees to 8 to 9 energized members. Outreach has refocused its mission and has helped us double our efforts with four outreach initiatives so that we might make a bigger impact. Outreach also added Advocacy to its lists of initiatives.

In review, in 2017, Bethlehem committed to staying at its current location and to doing the necessary repairs and renovations to nurture new members and ministries. In 2003, 2006, and 2011, studies were performed to make a decision about selling our facilities and moving or to staying at our location and renovating. All three studies concluded that we should stay at our current site and begin the long-delayed improvements. Staying without renovations is not an option, so the Leadership Council has been working with the Facilities and Finance ministries to identify and prioritize our renovations. The last study done a decade ago suggested a \$3 million renovation. The Leadership Council discerned a \$3 million renovation was not wise or practical but that far less may be adequate to give us a hopeful and meaningful future.

We have been blessed over the past several years with generous bequests that were entrusted to Bethlehem to help God's love thrive. These funds were never given with the intention that we might operate off the interest as opposed to supporting the general fund with our tithes and offerings. The funds were given that they might help miraculous things happen. We have been blessed with the McKay Fund, but also in 2017, we were blessed with large gifts that have made numerous opportunities possible. In the past 18 months, we have received gifts from individuals totaling more than \$287,000 designated for improvements to our facilities. Some of these gifts have been used to upgrade our nursery and children's bathrooms and the women's restroom (at the S. 4th Ave. entrance), paint the sanctuary, restore our slate and terrazzo floors, restore the men's sanctuary level restroom, and countless other improvements and repairs. Thanks to one of our donors, we anticipate air-conditioning our sanctuary and fellowship hall in 2018. Thank you to Steve Darr and the Facilities Ministry for their tireless efforts in not only working to maintain our building but also to improving it with an ever growing list of needs.

Thank you to Jeff Wortman and the Finance Ministry Team for spending countless hours working in the background to identify funding sources, present a budget, manage our investments, which brought a return of over \$125,000. Under their direction our finances are the most organized, transparent, accessible, and accountable they have ever been. The Finance Ministry has been intentional about educating and presenting Bethlehem's budget and funding sources in a way that has empowered our congregation from the pew, to the ministry teams, staff, and the Leadership Council. Thank you to our Finance team and staff members Carol Leyshock and Betty Clark for their integrity and hard work.

Thank you to Roy Muir, who worked to help launch a team dedicated to our stewardship campaign for 2018. Roy has been an excellent advisor regarding future stewardship strategies, and the development and implementation of a strategy for "legacy giving." Roy, you brought it all together! Thank you to Sue Wortman and Lily Tinker Fortel who provided excellent counsel

and development of our stewardship materials and honing the articulation of Bethlehem's vision.

Thank you to Jane Schmerberg and the Education Ministry Team for teaching, loving, and shepherding our children. Thank you for recommending the updating of our nursery and toddler room. Thank you for keeping our children safe and teaching them about God's love. Thank you to Jan Burnham and our Member Care Ministry for finding ways to stay connected to our members and for supporting the rollout of our Stephen Ministry program.

We have worked hard and faithfully the entire year by doing the hard work of building relationships, discerning and clarifying God's direction, and taking courageous steps to follow where God is leading us. We have done this through prayer, worship, service, outreach, and listening for God's voice and vision as it comes to us as one voice through the many voices of our congregation. I believe we are on the journey with God as a people who are building the community of heaven together here in Ann Arbor, Michigan. God is leading new faces to our congregation who have been hungering and searching for a community like Bethlehem United Church of Christ.

In 2017, we continued to work and make choices that are helping us as a Christian community to reveal Christ's love. I would like to express my gratitude and admiration to you, the members of Bethlehem UCC, for your support, time, tithes, and service. So many of you have delivered meals, run blood drives, visited the homebound, volunteered in the church office; been ushers, greeters, and liturgists; hosted fellowship hour, landscaped, cleaned, taught Sunday School, led groups, and so many other efforts.

As your pastor, I have met with many people for pastoral counseling, including marital counseling, funeral planning, personal crisis counseling, spiritual counseling, financial needs, death and grief support, and premarriage counseling. I have worked with people caring for children and aging parents; suicidal persons; abused women and children; those struggling with anxiety and depression and fears and emotions that have been pushed to the side for too long. There have been many pastoral calls with all the struggles mentioned above.

Thank you for your faith in God. Thank you for sharing the love of Christ. Thank you for trusting that the Holy Spirit is alive and brings forth new life in us and in our community.

God loves us all with no take-backs!
Pastor John

SPIRITUAL GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT

Lily Tinker Fortel

Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

In April 2017, I began my part-time staff position at Bethlehem as the Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development. My job description identifies three main areas of focus: middle- and high-school youth program, education ministry for all ages, and congregation-wide spiritual-formation activities. “The Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development will support the deep, organic, integral, and holistic spiritual becoming of the Bethlehem UCC community, including families and individuals of all ages, and the congregational body as a whole.”

I am grateful for the welcome you extended to me and for the work I have done with so many of you over the course of the past eight months. Below, you will find highlights of that work. Of all the wonderful things about Bethlehem, you—her members—stand out as the most remarkable. I have not named all the people with whom I have had the pleasure of working because the list would be too long! Still, know that I am honored to work with you. I am inspired by the way you put your faith into action. It is beautiful to walk with you as you nurture Bethlehem into the constant becoming that is the building of Heaven on Earth—or, as the UCC calls it, “A Just World for All.” You are the church, indeed. It is a joy to journey with you!

Middle and High School Youth Group - This year, the Youth Group made T-shirts that read, “You Belong.” This captures the spirit of Bethlehem’s Youth Group. It is a space where middle- and high-school students find care, respect, and belonging. They share stories of their lives and discuss questions and thoughts about our world and about faith and spirituality. They play games, make art, and sometimes just hang out! Special thanks to Jesse Wilcox, CJ Slotten, and Sarah Herwick for their ongoing support of the Youth Group as leaders, especially through a time of transition from fall 2016 to spring 2017.

- During the school year, Youth Group meets on Thursday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30. We share a meal—sometimes provided by parents of students, sometimes by congregation members. In November we added a new, regular Youth Group member. We have an average of 6 youth on Thursday evenings. In the summertime, we have a more casual dinner gathering/hangout most weeks. Some of our monthly themes from the past year include: Worship, Praying with Our Feet, Gratitude.
- Lock-Ins: We hold quarterly lock-ins. This year, there was a spring lock-in; a Halloween lock-in in October; and a Christmas Lock-In in December. In October, the youth, with the active leadership and contributions of Jesse Wilcox, constructed a Haunted House for Bethlehem members. About 15 members of all ages enjoyed the lock-in one Sunday after service. We’ve had an average of 8 youth at this year’s lock-ins.
- Other Activities: Sometimes we go to movies, festivals, or other performances; this year, several Youth Group women and their mothers attended the Women of Bethlehem Advent Evening.
- Looking Forward: This year, the Youth Group will work to make updates to the youth room that are reflective of how we see the Youth Group relating to Bethlehem and the broader Ann Arbor community. I also hope to see the Youth Group become a more integral part of the broader Bethlehem community—not only taking part in congregation-wide activities, but also helping to shape and develop them.

Education Ministry Team—Families with Young Children (see also the Education Ministry Team’s full report): I’ve enjoyed working with members of the Education Ministry Team this year. Some highlights of my work with the EMT include hiring a nursery/toddler Sunday school teacher; seeing the children sing with the choir on Sunday mornings; and leading a “Spiritual Toolkit” workshop with the Education Ministry Team, discussing what should be key areas of focus in Bethlehem’s Education Ministry.

- Most weeks, I have the pleasure of leading the “Time with Children” during the 10:00 a.m. Sunday worship service. It is a joy to interact with the children in this way.
- In September, Bethlehem hosted our first Friday Family Fun Night! The evenings include pizza dinner, activities, and a movie and popcorn in the Bethlehem Star Theater. This is now a monthly event. Still in its early stages, I hope this will become a space for Bethlehem members of all ages to come together for a fun evening, which especially provides an opportunity for all of us to grow in community with Bethlehem’s families with young children.
- Most months, with the help of Jane Schmerberg and Tom Ziesemer, I send out a mailing to Bethlehem’s children and youth. The mailings go to 15-20 families. This includes a monthly devotional, along with a note from me and the EMT.
- Looking forward: I’m excited to continue working with the notion of a “Spiritual Toolkit.” What are the spiritual “tools” we all need to strengthen us on our life’s journeys? How can we be best equipped to bring the “extravagant love” of God and Jesus to our world? As this spring progresses, we’ll work to identify key goals for our Education Ministry efforts for all ages. These goals will fit cohesively with Bethlehem’s “story”—our vision and mission.

Spiritual Growth and Education for Adults: Here are some highlights of my work with Bethlehem’s adult populations.

- Prayer Group: Dindy Haab (coordinator of Bethlehem’s Prayer Chain) and I started the Bethlehem Prayer Circle in July. Now we meet twice monthly on Thursday mornings. We have an average of six people in attendance as we pray for those on the Bethlehem prayer list; and for Bethlehem, our world, and one another.
- Meditation Group: In both May and September, Bethlehem members were invited to participate in the 21-Day Meditation Experience with Oprah Winfrey and Deepak Chopra. Eight to 10 people joined each of the two 21-day sessions. We met in person, shared potluck meals, and checked-in by phone about our individual experiences of the course.
- Spiritual Exploration Classes: In August, I held a four-week experiential class on “Spiritual Practices.” Together, the group of 8-10 participants discussed some of the fundamental aspects of faith and spirituality and explored embodied spiritual practices, such as hand washing, mindful eating, and scriptural exploration. In October, I hosted a three-week series in which we explored the themes of “faith, hope, and love” (1 Corinthians 13:13).
- Evening Worship, September-November: I held a monthly evening worship in the chapel. These organic, experiential gatherings include music, reflection, and some sort of shared activity exploring our faith. We will begin the evening worships again following Easter.

- I also provide articles for the *Visitor* each month, reports on recent activities, and announcements of upcoming activities.
- Looking forward: This spring and fall, we will continue refining existing opportunities and exploring new ones. I also plan to offer group Bible discussions and explorations.

Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team; and Young Adults

- I worked with the Welcome Ministry Team to throw a college-student Welcome Pizza Party. We also invited area college students to Oktoberfest; several members of the German Club at U-M attended.
- Looking forward: Surrounded by student housing, Bethlehem is uniquely positioned to be a resource for many A2 college and graduate students. There are also area young adults/professionals who were confirmed in Bethlehem. We will work to connect with them in the coming year. Katie Rowan has been elected as the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team chair. We're working together to strengthen youth programming and to expand programming to young adults!

Community Engagement: Jesus modeled that community engagement is a central part of our faith.

- Parking Lot Fundraisers: The parking-lot fundraisers became church-wide this year, whereas in the past they had been a youth-specific fundraising activity. Thanks to all who coordinated and volunteered during the Art Fair and the University of Michigan football season.
- I've enjoyed engaging with the broader Ann Arbor community through participation in the Interfaith Roundtable (IRT) of Washtenaw County. In addition to participating in the IRT's annual Thanksgiving celebration and attending IRT monthly meetings, I was honored to receive a recognition for interfaith work at the Bahá'í Community of Washtenaw County *Light of Unity Festival* in October 2017.
- I am grateful to several ministry teams at Bethlehem for supporting our sponsorship of the "Skate against Hate" in October. Several Bethlehem members joined in as we tabled at the event, making buttons, distributing pretzels, and having conversations about Bethlehem.
- I've also attended meetings of the Association of Religious Counselors at the University of Michigan. It's been a joy to attend community events, including Rep. John Lewis's lecture in November, with Bethlehem members. I look forward to more of this in 2018.

Habitat Trip and Outreach Ministry Team

- Six Bethlehem members traveled to Flint, Michigan, for a three-day service trip in August. We camped two nights at Seven Lakes State Park and volunteered at the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and Habitat for Humanity of Genesee County; we also attended Sunday service and discussion at Woodside UCC in Flint. I'm grateful to the shared planning and leadership with this year's participants in ensuring we were able to carry on this Bethlehem tradition. In September, we held a cake auction fundraiser. Although later in the year, it was a great afternoon and we raised just over \$2000! Thanks to all who planned, baked, and bought! It was also a joy to coordinate the Bethlehem Fjords CROP Walk team in October. We had 11 walkers and surpassed our \$1000 fundraising goal! (See more in OMT's full report.)
- Looking forward: It has been a pleasure working with the Outreach Ministry Team this year. I look forward to continued work with the Outreach Ministry Team to raise

awareness about current OMT projects for outreach and service. And I look forward to building a Bethlehem narrative that frames outreach and service as an integral part of our communal and individual spiritual formation. We will work to coordinate another Habitat trip this summer. We are also exploring options for a youth-specific mission trip in summer 2018.

Stephen Ministry: See Stephen Ministry report. Although this is outside my initial job description, I believe Stephen Ministry will contribute to the overall spiritual growth and well-being of the Bethlehem community. About 25% of my weekly time is currently dedicated to conducting the training of BUCC's first Stephen Ministry team.

I'd like to thank Bethlehem for your support of my professional development. In May 2017, I attended Faith Forward, a conference focused on progressive approaches to youth and children's ministry. I am currently enrolled in an online UCC Polity course that runs through April 2018. I look forward to bringing items from this course into my work with Bethlehem. I am grateful for this opportunity to deepen my knowledge of the UCC as I seek ordination.

Finally, It was a joy to work with a handful of folks on the framing and messaging materials for Bethlehem's 2018 Stewardship Campaign. Along with the work on the Spiritual Toolkit mentioned above, I see this as part of developing a shared story of Bethlehem Church. With a shared understanding of the strengths and struggles of our past and present, and a shared vision for our future in the midst of a changing world, there are many possibilities for the direction of Bethlehem moving forward. Above, you've read some of the highlights of my work over the past eight months. I look forward to the possibilities the coming year will bring in the spiritual growth and development of Bethlehem and of you, her members of all ages, as we seek to build "A Just World for All"!

It is a joy to journey with you!

Lily Tinker Fortel

Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

CONGREGATIONAL PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Leadership Council found 2017 challenging, with an impatience to move forward with overdue maintenance and cosmetic changes to our church, working closely with the Facilities Ministry, the Finance Ministry Team, and the congregation to make these things happen.

Leadership took on the responsibility of Stewardship, and Roy Muir graciously shared his ideas with us to make this year's campaign a success.

In 2017, we were blessed with a generous financial gift that was designated for air conditioning our sanctuary, but to accomplish it, we need to address renovating the fellowship hall located under the sanctuary. Leadership Council approved a proposal from Phoenix Construction Company to provide us with an architectural plan and costs to implement it.

The arrival of Lily Tinker Fortel, our Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development, brought much-needed support to Pastor John, to our ministry teams, and to our congregation.

The Worship Ministry Team provides us with inspirational services throughout the year and introduced the Living Nativity scene in December.

The Member Care Ministry Team introduced the congregation to Stephen Ministry. Kurt Schmerberg, Lily Tinker Fortel, and Pastor John Kennedy are trained to be Stephen Ministry Leaders.

The Welcome Ministry Team provided the church with a cast aluminum plaque commemorating Bethlehem's Covenant of Welcome.

The Outreach Ministry Team determines who will benefit from our financial support.

The Education Ministry Team is busy with creative plans to build our Sunday school.

The Fellowship Ministry Team works with other teams to create all-church family events.

The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team, with Lily Tinker Fortel and Katie Rowan's leadership, will meet the challenge of providing programs for all.

I encourage you to read the ministry teams' reports because I have only touched on a few of their accomplishments for 2017.

Bethlehem United Church of Christ under the direction of Pastor John Kennedy and our Leadership Council is a vibrant and a healthy church.

Susan Buday, President

**Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Congregational Meeting
Minutes, January 29, 2017**

Attendance 78 (Quorum is 25)

The meeting was called to order by President Sue Buday.

An opening prayer was offered by Pastor John Kennedy.

- **A motion to accept the agenda as distributed was approved.**
- **A motion to accept the minutes of the April 17, 2016 Congregational Meeting was approved.**
- **A motion to accept the minutes of the May 22, 2016 Special Congregational Meeting was approved.**
- **A motion to accept the minutes of the Special Congregational Meeting November 20, 2016 was approved.**

Della DiPietro, Nominations Committee Chair, presented the slate of nominations for open positions.

- **A motion to accept the slate of nominees by affirmation was approved.**

Proposed General Operating Budget for 2017 -

Jeff Wortman acknowledged the other members of the Finance Ministry team, Jane Conlen and Linda Young, and mentioned 2016 highlights including completion of Financial Policies and Procedures.

He presented a detailed proposal of the 2017 general operating budget of revenues and expenses. Youth funds are being brought into the Operating Budget and designated for Youth. The proposal shows a projected revenue shortfall of about 5%, requiring funds be taken from investment accounts.

- **A motion to accept the general operating budget for 2017 as presented was approved.**

Capital Expenses for 2017-

Steve Darr went over the expected Capital expenses for 2017. Two items exceeding \$15,000 needed approval of the Governing Body.

Steve asked Todd Tribble to explain the process of painting the sanctuary to start the next morning, pending approval by the Congregation. The painting will take two to three weeks and will be the same color as it was, including the gold leaf; also to be painted are the north entry, stairwell and balcony.

- **A motion to repaint the sanctuary and 4th Ave inside walls, with costs not to exceed \$43,000, was approved.**

4th Ave Women's Restroom: a portion of the work has been done.

- **A motion to complete the renovation of the Women's Restroom at the 4th Avenue entrance, with costs not to exceed \$16,900, was approved.**

Steve mentioned the new light in the south east corner of the parking lot.

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Samford, Secretary

**Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Congregational Meeting
Minutes, April 30, 2017**

Attendance 60 (Quorum is 25)

Pastor John began the meeting with prayer.

Sue Buday called on each Ministry Team Chair or representative to make additions to the report and answer any questions. All teams indicated their reports stood as printed.

A question was asked of Member Care concerning the status of the Stephen Ministries program.

Pastor John reported three persons (Kurt Schmerberg, Lily Tinker Fortel, and Carol Durnwald) have agreed to be Stephen Leaders and will receive training in the fall. They will then train others as Stephen Ministers.

Jan Burnham added Member Care has developed a Care Meals program, providing meals to families where a family member has had surgery etc.

Laura Seyfried pointed out the Outreach Team will continue to support many of the same groups and will do some new things.

Fellowship Chair – As it was not included in the Fellowship report, Jane Ziesemer will provide the Leadership Council with the total freewill offering from various events.

Marilyn Pearson - Cemetery Board President, indicated a new Cemetery Website is nearly ready.

Pastor John mentioned his report is also included in the Annual Report.

• **A motion to accept the 2016 Annual Report as submitted was approved.**

The meeting was closed with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Samford, Secretary

**Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Special Congregational Meeting
Minutes, August 13, 2017**

Quorum of 25 was more than met with approximately 75 in attendance

Pastor John opened the meeting with prayer.

Sue Buday began by announcing the only agenda item was approval of using unrestricted/undesignated funds to repair the church foundation of the church, specifically the storage room in fellowship hall.

Steve Darr said Facilities is soliciting bids from 2 other companies but they have not yet come in.

Payeur came in and found the stone foundation grout is being washed out.

Payeur has offered a bid of \$22,110, with an additional \$11,220 if they need to build another wall on the outside. They bid \$15,300 for the inside work but Steve felt we could do that in house for less.

• A motion to allow spending up to \$50,000 to repair the foundation of the church was approved.

The meeting was closed with prayer by Lily.

Respectfully submitted, Karen Samford, Secretary

MUSIC DEPARTMENT

Bethlehem is fortunate to have a community that highly values the power and beauty of music-making. Our regular services on Sunday mornings are made more intimate by the inclusion of thoughtful and relevant anthems, solos, and special music. In 2017, we saw a continuation of this amazing musical tradition, along with some expansion and development of our musical gifts. Our congregation continues to be moved by service music. For myself, it has been a blessing to become a part of a church that values music so highly during my first year in Ann Arbor.

Music was provided in 2017 by the Chancel Choir, Gail Jennings on the organ, Jim Rowan and the Handbell Choir, and various guest musicians. These diverse guest musicians include our own Gary Maki on the trumpet, Andrew Jennings on the violin, soloists from within our choir, and many other beautiful players. Having many different musicians perform Sunday to Sunday means there is always a welcome variety of music for our congregation to enjoy. Gary Rogers is instrumental in ensuring that the sound quality of the music is great and that what is broadcast over the radio each week is crystal clear.

The Chancel Choir frequently performed two anthems a Sunday during 2017. This was often met with enthusiasm, and folks enjoyed the expanded role of the choir during services. Performing more than one anthem offered more opportunities to collaborate with the Wannabes and other soloists. Several Sundays featured the children of our congregation to great effect! Many anthems in 2017 were more contemporary and offered fresh musical takes on the familiar scripture. Paid section leaders fill out the choir's sound and allow the choir to tackle more substantial and emotional repertoire.

Jim Rowan and the Handbell Choir continue to rehearse on Monday evenings and offer valuable musical leadership once a month. Their contributions to worship cannot be overstated. Monthly Solo Sundays continue to be an opportunity to showcase the talent of members of our congregation, our section leaders, and instrumentalists. Soloists have included Sarah Herwick, P.J. Lindemann, Allison Prost, and many others. From a logistical standpoint, these solo days were helpful in managing the section-leader budget in an exciting way.

The Easter and Christmas seasons were musical monuments for the church year. Both holiday services featured strings, brass, and winds along with our own choir. Easter included the beautiful Five Mystical Songs by Vaughan Williams; Christmas showcased the music of John Rutter. The late Christmas Eve service welcomed Deborah Gabrion once again to play harp, and the talented Solid Brass quintet returned to perform at Christmas and Easter services. The summer season saw several services accompanied by string quartet while Gail and the choirs took a well-deserved break.

Aside from worship services, Bethlehem's rich musical culture has attracted many outside performers. The professional choir Audivi frequently performs here, and a recent choral recital by Jessica Allen was extremely beautiful and effective. Hopefully, these relationships can continue to be strengthened over time, and new relationships with other ensembles can be formed.

I was fortunate to join the music team at Bethlehem starting in September 2017 as tenor section leader. Arianne Abela was exceedingly generous in allowing me to conduct during multiple services during the fall semester. These opportunities allowed me to develop a strong rapport with Gail and the Chancel Choir members, making my transition into the role of Interim Music Director quite smooth. In the near future, I look forward to another great Easter, to continue improving and renovating our choir room, and to building stronger connections between myself and the members of the congregation.

Neither Arianne nor myself would have been nearly as successful without the help of Gail Jennings, Jim Rowan, Gary Rogers, and of course our extremely talented, warm, and gracious section leaders. I am personally grateful for the unconditional support of Lily and Pastor John, as well as Carol and Donna and everyone else who helps Bethlehem run! I look forward to the rest of my semester as Interim Music Director, and to a long future of beautiful music-making at Bethlehem!

*Respectfully submitted,
Thomas Burton, Interim Music Director*

FINANCE MINISTRY TEAM

This is the third year in which the stewardship of Bethlehem's financial assets have been consolidated under one team to oversee the general operating budget, Memorials and Gifts, the Investment Fund, and the ongoing income from the McKay and Feldkamp trust funds. As our church progresses to implement its new structure and bylaws put in place three years ago, we continue to identify opportunities to more effectively manage and utilize the church's financial assets holistically as well as develop and implement improved procedures to ensure our stewardship of Bethlehem's financial resources.

Bethlehem ended 2017 in a better financial condition than anticipated while addressing numerous building repairs and improvements along with new programming. For the year, the balance sheet improved by \$88,308 with a year-end balance of \$1,466,720.

With a plan to invest Bethlehem's financial resources to grow our church for the future, the congregation approved an operating budget with expenditures of \$553,537 with a forecasted shortfall of \$102,565 to be funded from the Investment Fund. The actual shortfall was less than forecasted at \$88,527. Expenses for the year came in \$38,060 below the forecasted budget. Offerings and rental income were short of forecast by a total of \$24,022 on a budget plan of \$450,972. Rental income is expected to increase substantially next year with rental agreements initiated with the University Of Michigan School Of Nursing, while rental agreements with 1 on 1 Basketball to use the gym have been terminated. Because the details of offerings and pledges are only known to two office staff employees, an understanding of pledge shortfall is not straightforward in assessing that situation.

In 2017 funding and support for Youth and Young Adult ministries was integrated into and supported by the general operating budget. Previously, these areas were funded with separate funds from youth fundraising. Existing funds were moved to Memorials and Gifts in accounts set aside for youth activities and intergenerational mission trips with all monies being managed under common processes and authorizations.

In 2017 Bethlehem was very fortunate to earn \$136,732 in the Investment Fund in dividends, interest, and capital gains. This more than offset the financial requirements for the general operating budget shortfall of \$88,527; \$50,000 was also funded to address critical foundation repairs. The Investment Fund balance at year end was \$1,162,795. The investments in this fund are managed in a relatively conservative portfolio by our financial advisor at Bank of Ann Arbor. The Finance Ministry team meets at least once a year with the financial advisor (more often if necessary) to ensure our advisor is aligned with our objectives.

Memorials and Gifts ended the year with a balance of \$255,954 after starting the year with \$144,603. Throughout the year Memorials and Gifts provided over \$240,000 to support the various ministries of Bethlehem. The largest expenditure was the painting of the sanctuary at \$43,700. We transferred \$25,906 from the old Youth Funds into Memorials and Gifts to establish the new Youth Fund (\$20,210) and the Intergenerational Mission Fund (\$5,696). Very generous donations were made this year by Mary Lou Wenk and Lois Haeussler. We are blessed

and thankful for these donations along with the donations of many others to support the mission of Bethlehem. A report on all fund balances within the Memorials and Gifts Fund is found later in the report.

The McKay and Feldkamp trusts' ongoing incomes contributed over \$53,600 in 2017. These funds continue to do good works for the building, congregation, and community. These individuals had such foresight for which Bethlehem is so thankful!

One functional change in 2017 involved the transfer of stewardship campaign responsibilities to the Leadership Council and a group dedicated to this vital function. After 3 years of trying to handle our new consolidated financial activity at year end while also building new budgets for the following year, it became obvious that this vital activity occurring in the same time frame required that it be handled by a different group.

A special thank-you goes to Jane Conlen in her final year as a member of the Finance Ministry Team. A special thanks goes to the staff at Bethlehem that has provided Finance with the reports and tools necessary to do the job.

The Finance Ministry Team continues to work to increase the transparency of Bethlehem's financial affairs and improve the congregation's understanding of the church's financial resources and requirements to perform the church's mission. Continued focus on financial processes and procedures by all functions and ministry teams within the church will ensure proper controls and stewardship of Bethlehem's financial resources going forward.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jeff Wortman, Chair*

FACILITIES MINISTRY TEAM

The Facilities Ministry Team has the responsibility to develop and implement plans to maintain, preserve, and improve church properties, as well as coordinate the use and management of the facilities. The complete role and responsibilities of the Facilities Ministry Team are listed in the bylaws. The elected members are Steve Darr (chair), John Irwin, and Tom Ziesemer. At-large members are Michelle Loukotka, Ron Dechert (LC liaison), Carol Leyshock (parish administrator), and Rev. John Kennedy (ex officio).

The year started with a major restoration project to repair and paint the walls of the sanctuary and balcony/landing. The wooden cross beams were treated. Todd Tribble and his team did a great job handling this project in a caring and timely fashion. We would like to thank those who took part in setting up and taking down our temporary worship area in the fellowship hall.

Another major repair was completed on the church's foundation on the south and east sides of the basement. This included digging out the area between the building and the Fourth Avenue house. The stone wall was reinforced and sealed inside and out. New concrete was poured under the shed to divert water away from the building. The inside area was framed, and new dry wall was installed. We will need to paint the floor area in the pantry and then return supplies to that area.

Additional projects and accomplishments/repairs:

- Added lighting to the south parking lot.
- Painted the nursery and preschool rooms, installed new ceiling lights, reset toilets. Sanded, painted, and remediated the lead windows.
- Installed a new lighting switch and dimmer panel in the sanctuary.
- Painted the small outside windows on the south and west side of the sanctuary.
- Replaced the commercial refrigerators in the big kitchen and the sacristy.
- Renovated the Fourth Avenue women's restroom. This will be a model for additional restrooms in the building. Thank you, **Kris Lovelace**, for your extensive design work and for the care with which you managed most of this project.
- Painted and installed new lights and ceiling tiles in the men's restroom on the landing by the east sanctuary entrance. We plan to complete the stalls, toilets, floor, faucets, and other fixtures in 2018.
- Painted the new siding on the parsonage that had been installed in late 2016.
- Cleaned up after major flood damage in the parsonage basement. Drainage issues caused a second flooded area.
- Made several improvements to the Fourth Avenue house (interior painting, gutter guards, window repairs, repair of holes and cracks in the foundation, new stove/oven). Jim Stadel added new outside lighting on the south and west sides.
- Did several slate-roof repairs, heat-cable installation, and repairs of fallen down spouts. Roof issues had caused water leaks requiring these repairs.
- Repaired the flat roof on the 1966 addition.
- Repaired and painted the old medical loan closet on the 2nd floor landing and added new ceramic flooring, ceiling tiles, and lighting. Unfortunately, we had more water leaks that were later repaired. This is now being used for storage by the U of M School of

Nursing, which is renting space for a medical project.

- Oversaw tree removal and trimming from the east side of the building and behind the Fourth Avenue house.
- Replaced boiler pipes in the pantry to the south exit door in the fellowship hall and in the table storage closet. The pantry contents were relocated during the process.
- Replaced the boiler condensation pump.
- Unclogged a blocked sewer pipe requiring access through the basement men's room.
- Replaced the toilet in the basement men's room.
- Repaired the church shed on the east side of building.
- Replaced lights on the pedestrian walkway.
- Serviced the boiler.
- Replaced the sump pump in the elevator shaft.
- Repaired the storage door by the art room; also placed a door vent in the adjacent door.
- Replaced a belt on the flat roof that runs the fans to the 2 restrooms near the office.
- Repaired the commercial dishwasher.
- Repaired/replaced several light fixtures.
- Placed insulation in the windows behind the organ.

We researched and met with several insurance companies to determine the best option for our property insurance policy. We signed a contract with Church Mutual. This was a money-saving move on our part. Thank you, **John Irwin**, for all of your extensive research and hours spent interviewing insurance agents and comparing policy options.

We removed mat runners from the hallways to show the beautiful slate flooring. We repaired and refinished the slate floor from the Fourth Avenue entrance down the north hallway. We cleaned carpets and runners throughout the church.

Jim Stadel is a valuable asset to Bethlehem UCC for his leadership and for sharing his knowledge to help with several repairs and daily tasks that are needed to make this building function properly. Some of those items needed in 2017 were:

- Repaired leaky pipes, replaced burned out lights, replaced signs in the parking lot, repaired or removed bathroom faucets, toilets, and fixtures, drained the boiler and added softeners, cleaned and torqued the big sanctuary fan, replaced batteries in detectors/alarms, set up/took down tables and chairs for pretzel rolling and all other church events. Changed outside pedestrian lights, helped with scaffolding, etc. Jim shared his leadership with members of facilities and also trained our new caretaker, **Brad Gabriel**, to help with some of these responsibilities. We are sorry to report that Brad died over the Christmas holidays. We have recently hired a replacement caretaker, **Ron Kryc**.

Jenny Foster led the effort to plant flowers from Easter and Mother's Day donations. She was assisted by Jacquie Katz, Michelle Loukotka, Erin Foster, Sue Irwin, and Pam Widmayer. Jenny, Erin, Pam, Jacquie, Fred Castenholz, Kris Lovelace, and Andrew Foster maintained the church grounds throughout the summer, weeding and watering flowers and shrubs. Thanks to all of them for beautifying our church.

The Facilities Ministry Team is looking at ways to lower utility costs and electrical usage. We are gathering information on the use of **solar energy** for possible future use in the building. John Irwin and Tom Ziesemer have had a meeting with Michigan Interfaith Power and Light and the City of Ann Arbor. We have attended an open house that was also attended by several area churches and businesses. We would like to invite those interested in joining a team to help move this forward.

Bethlehem used several vendors to take care of repairs/upgrades in 2017

- Vedder Electric
- Tribble Painting
- ML Quality Painting
- Roto-Rooter
- Master Tech
- Hutzal Plumbing
- Precision Climate—boiler
- Tremco—flat roof repair
- Ken Cook Plumbing
- Maulbetsch Excavating and Tree
- Wolverine Moore Glass
- Payeur Foundation
- Vogel's Lock & Safe
- Hobart—dishwasher, refrigerator
- Lowe's
- Butcher & Butcher—slate roof
- Pat Walters & Sons (parsonage)
- Stadium Hardware
- DDI, Inc. (S. Darr) —drywall
- Physio-Control—AED
- Corporate Cleaners
- Grunwell-Cashero—masonry
- Schindler Elevator
- GL Milliken—plaster
- Shamrock Floorcovering
- American Building Services—slate/terrazzo floors
- Randall Scott Co.—carpentry, ceilings, lights, flooring, paint, remediation/lead windows
- Northern Pizza Equipment—2 commercial refrigerators

The Facilities Ministry Team was very busy in 2017. We will continue to monitor and oversee repairs of various areas of the building. To help us, please continue to advise us of any building issues, and we thank you for your patience.

During 2017, building rentals contributed to income for the church. Several of these rentals require set- up/takedown, as well as sextons (members of Facilities and church volunteers) to monitor and assist rental groups. Our many rentals included:

- Ann Arbor Youth Chorale (weekly and two concerts)
- Weddings
- Home schoolers (weekly Sept–May)
- Baby and wedding showers
- U-M School of Nursing research project (twice a week)
- U-M and private recitals
- Debora Zamperla art classes (several times per year)
- Kerry Town Concert House concert
- Fisher House concert and rehearsal

We have reviewed and prioritized capital projects that we feel need attention in 2018 with the assistance of our Leadership Council and Finance Ministry Team. This list has been provided to the Leadership Council.

A special thanks to our parish administrator, **Carol Leyshock**, for her dedication and leadership with the Facilities Ministry Team. Carol tracks all the building usage and contracts with vendors, handles spread sheets on projects, sets up our agenda, and prepares budgets and financial reports. Her monthly assistance to the Facilities Ministry Team has been a vital asset.

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Ziesemer
Elected Member
Facilities Ministry Team

EDUCATION MINISTRY TEAM

SUNDAY SCHOOL: We continue to have a dedicated core of teachers and substitutes. Attendance, in class, has averaged this fall 10–15 youth in our preschool and elementary level, which is up since last year. The highest attendance was for the children's Christmas program, but this involved some of our middle- and high-school youth. Our middle- and high-school youth are encouraged to attend worship and help in various capacities that include working in the nursery, helping in Sunday school, and ushering but are not captured in the Sunday school attendance. We want to continue working with the Worship Ministry Team to find opportunities to integrate youth into the worship service.

Our current education groups are:

1. Nursery and Preschool/Kindergarten: We hired Kelsey Postler to teach in our preschool. She started this fall and teaches every week. She is a student at U-M, and she loves our children. She has been a great success. We wanted someone who is there every week as a bright and welcoming teacher for the continuity of the children. We still have a second adult volunteer every week. The attendance has picked up, and now we routinely have up to 7 children.
2. First–Sixth Grades: This class is stable and has a dedicated rotating group of teachers. Two teachers team-teach each week with one taking the lead each week.
3. Confirmed youth are encouraged to come to services or to volunteer. Once a month we are offering an alternative to being in the 10:00 service called Walk & Talk. One Sunday a month, middle- and high-school youth meet in the sanctuary and leave after the Children's Moment to walk to a nearby coffee shop or restaurant. There is no specific agenda, but it allows for a friendly encounter to connect to one another. It does seem to bring back some of our youth. Lily is exploring the idea of possibly having a meal or coffee hour after church once a month with youth (or perhaps youth with family) but is still trying to find out what youth and families want.

We continue to use *The Whole People of God* curriculum, which is lectionary based. This allows us to connect to the sermons. The Children's Moment is often used to introduce the lesson. Having the same message in worship and in Sunday school lets the children start with the rest of the congregation and then regroup with their classmates for an age-appropriate lesson and project. This curriculum gives the teachers several options for lesson and project ideas related to the lectionary.

We mail *Upper Room* devotional booklets to our youth families bimonthly. We send *Pockets* to the younger students and *Devo's* to the older students.

INTERGENERATIONAL SUNDAYS: In the fall of 2014, we introduced intergenerational worship for the first Sunday of each month. We had many reasons and goals for this and feel that we have made inroads. We have some children who do prefer to be with their families for the whole service even on other Sundays. The advantages include:

1. Having families worship together.
2. Having all our parishioners get to know our youth.

3. Having our youth familiar with our services and liturgy.
4. Letting youth participate in the full worship as they are able, including singing, as acolytes, helping with ushering, offering, and even as liturgists, if they are willing.
5. Having our youth and teachers take communion if they wish.
6. Letting children who are not yet ready for communion be able to learn about it with their families.
7. Having our youth and teachers hear our pastors preach.

We have “busy bags” that contain activities to help little ones sit through worship. These have been well-received. We try to keep them full and rotate them. There are also lectionary-based children’s programs that are available for Sunday services.

LEARNING-WITH-OUR-CHILDREN MOMENTS: Thank you to John and Lily for their continued creativity in our Children’s Moment each Sunday. We truly do have the opportunity to learn with these wonderful children. Who can forget those beautiful children wrapped up in pink and purple felt with felt flames on their heads as they were a living Advent wreath?!

YOUTH MISSION PROJECTS AND GIVING: We continue to put a big emphasis on our youth mission projects. These projects put into action the teaching and values that are at the core of Christianity, the UCC, and the teaching of Jesus. This year for our year-long project we chose the Ruth Ellis Center that helps marginalized and homeless youth.

1. We collected boxes of clothing (sweatshirts, socks, underwear, pants) that were delivered to Ruth Ellis the week before Christmas. We also collected money through our Advent envelopes. We were able to collect more than \$500, which was sent directly to the center.
2. Backpacks and School Supplies: At our Rally Day service on the first Sunday in September, we collected 4 large boxes full of school supplies.
3. Mitten Tree: During the Christmas season, Bethlehem donated more than 300 hats, mittens, scarves, and socks on the Mitten Tree to Peace Neighborhood Center and Washtenaw Refugee Welcome (WRW). Many of the items were hand-made by our parishioners. WRW had been so grateful for these hand-made items last year that we donated again to them.
4. Money and Gift-Card Collection: In addition, we donated toys and money (from the Advent envelopes) to Peace Neighborhood Center for their Christmas distribution to children and families. There was more than \$1400 in checks and gift cards that were given to Peace Neighborhood Center.

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT AND ADVENT WORKSHOP POTLUCK: We once again had a wonderful Christmas pageant during the 10:00 service on the second Sunday of Advent. The play was directed by Sarah Herwick and C.J. Sloten. It was a mix of new and old—a combination of *Star Wars* with part of the familiar Christmas story. Who knew there were parallels with Herod and Darth Vader and Mary and Princess Leah? It kept everyone engaged, and we had children from toddler through high school. It was followed by a potluck brunch (coordinated by Jan Eadie) and the Advent workshop (organized by Nancy Pieske). We had our highest youth attendance that day.

CONFIRMATION: There will not be a class this year due to a lack of youth in this age group.

YOUTH GROUP: We continued to have weekly middle- and high-school Youth Group, with attendance averaging 6–10. Lily Tinker Fortel is in charge of the Youth Group. There is a core group of youth leaders who attend and participate, including Sarah Herwick, Jesse Wilcox, and C.J. Slotten. They have had many activities, including lock-ins, Skate against Hate and the CROP Walk.

ADULT EDUCATION:

Jamie Dylenski led a class on the Old Testament in early 2017 and one on the New Testament that started January 2018.

Lily Tinker Fortel had two education opportunities last summer: a Spiritual Practices Series with Lily and the “21-Day Meditation Experience.”

Stephen Ministry training has started, led by Kurt Schmerberg, Lily Tinker Fortel, and Pastor John Kennedy, and will commission the first group by Easter. It is a wonderful learning opportunity, and there are plans to start a second class in the future.

MCKAY SCHOLARSHIPS: In 2017, McKay Scholarships were granted to the following: Debbie Belcher, Caroline Elliot, Misty Fisher, Erin Foster, Jessica Joslin, Sarah Kennedy, Adrienne Paton, Rachel Schenk, Jennifer Steinaway, and Tyler Tribble.

Education Ministry Team:

Jane Schmerberg, Chair
Karen Samford, Secretary
Tom Ziesemer, Administration
Julie Feldkamp, Nancy Pieske, Eileen Koprowski, Jan Eadie, Wanda Modica

Church School Teachers:

Preschool: Kelsey Postler with help from Jane Schmerberg, Nancy Pieske, Karen Samford, Eileen Koprowski, Jennifer Vasquez, Ellie Vasquez, Diana Slaughter, Nancy Nicholson, Caroline Ashenfelter, Janelle Buday
First Grade–Grade 6: Nancy Pieske, Jan Eadie, Julie Feldkamp, Jill Schwartz
Walk & Talk chaperones: Jane Schmerberg, Nancy Nicholson, Kurt Schmerberg, Isaac Wilcox, Lily Tinker Fortel

*Respectfully submitted,
Jane Nicholson Schmerberg, Chair*

WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Worship Ministry strives to provide meaningful worship opportunities for our entire congregation. We continually assess the needs of our members and visitors to enhance the worship experience. We welcome and encourage any feedback to assist us in making any new decisions and changes.

Lent: Ash Wednesday services were offered at noon and 6 p.m. and imposition of ashes was at 6 a.m. by Pastor Kennedy. Palm Sunday was again alive with palm fronds and trees secured by Donna Whitney, and a brunch was held following the 10 o'clock service under the direction of Fellowship. Maundy Thursday service included a simple meal and ritual hand washing during an intimate service held in the gallery. There was a Good Friday service at noon, and a tenebrae service was held at 7 p.m. in the sanctuary. On Easter, we had a sunrise service at the cemetery with refreshments and the 10 o'clock service in the sanctuary.

A new sanctuary banner was purchased during our season of Advent under the guidance of Tom Ziesemer. It has added a fresh, new feel to our worship space.

The Living Nativity returned to 4th Avenue at Bethlehem on December 1. Many hands made light work and put together a memorable experience for our congregation and visitors to downtown Midnight Madness. We extend a big thank-you to Tom Ziesemer for spearheading the event and to George Pritchett for making the suggestion of a comeback. Thanks also to Harriette Ehnis, Gary Rogers, Pat O'Reilly, Shannon O'Reilly, Jane Schmerberg, and Welcome and Fellowship Ministries, who all provided a helping hand in one way or another. To the rest of the volunteers and participants, we are grateful for your time and talents to make the Living Nativity a reality in 2017. We are already planning for 2018, so mark your calendars for Friday, November 30; Thor the Camel and his friends are booked and ready to help us share the good news of Christ's birth.

Altar Guild: Michelle Loukotka leads a group of volunteers who prepare communion for our church services on the first Sunday of each month, as well as on special Sundays. They take care of set-up, distribution of the elements (by intinction or in the pews), clean-up, and communion kits for the homebound. Altar Guild is also responsible for the care of the candles, paraments, and brass items (candelabras, Bible stand, etc.) in the sanctuary and chapel. Altar Guild members also assist in set-up for special services (Totenfest, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Palm Sunday, Easter).

Radio Broadcast: We continue to try to improve the worship experience for our radio listeners. Announcements were moved to 9:55 a.m. so the worship service could begin promptly at 10 a.m. to ensure that the majority of worship would be heard during the radio hour. The Radio Broadcast group continues to raise the money necessary to continue broadcasting our services. We are grateful for their hard work and dedication to this very important aspect of our ministry. Gary Rogers leads the group of soundboard operators: Jamie Dylenski, Edgar Vasquez, E.J. Vasquez, Kurt Schmerberg, Jesse Wilcox, and Jim Stadel all help out to make sure our service is heard on the radio and recorded to be uploaded by John Samford to our website.

Music: Arianne Abela continued to lead the music program this year. The Chancel Choir has provided weekly music with the exception of the summer months. We heard from Stevie D. and

the Wannabes, Abby Bowers, Adrienne Paton, Gary Maki, Val Jaskiewicz, and several vocal soloists over the year—all of whom provided us with beautiful music for worship. Gail Jennings continues as our talented organist as we celebrated her 25 years here at Bethlehem in September. Jim Rowan continues to lead our Handbell Choir, and they bestow their talents on us monthly and during special services as well. Arianne will be leaving her position in early 2018, and an interim director will be assigned until a permanent music director can be hired. Our goal moving forward is to offer programming for a children's/youth choir. We will also be looking at ways to integrate different modes and genres of music into our worship services.

We are very appreciative of our Sunday liturgists who continue to assist Pastor Kennedy during our Sunday morning services. These lay leaders give of their time and talent to provide another voice in our worship experience.

Lily Tinker Fortel, our Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development, has become a welcome addition to our worship services. We are grateful for her work with the youth and children in our congregation. We have benefited from her development of new worship opportunities outside of our Sunday morning services. She has offered prayer circle opportunities and evening weekday worship, assisted in developing the Blue Christmas service offered in December, and given an assist to Pastor Kennedy at the 5 o'clock family service on Christmas Eve. We look forward to all the gifts and talents she will continue to provide for our congregation.

A big thank-you to the other ministry teams, volunteers, and staff who help the Worship Ministry turn our ideas into reality. We could not accomplish our goals without the help of so many dedicated individuals.

*Respectfully submitted,
Caroline Ashenfelter, Chair*

MEMBER CARE MINISTRY TEAM

In our third year, the Member Care Ministry Team continued to expand efforts to build a network of caring within our church community and ensure support and caring for those in need. Also, we reached out to members becoming less active. We conducted a review of our membership rolls required during odd-numbered years. We also took steps to encourage new and continuing members in the life of the church. As we worked, we were continually reminded of all the ways our members help others within our congregation and community.

Since the adoption by the Leadership Council in 2016 of our proposal to begin a Stephen Ministry program at Bethlehem, we are excited to note the progress that has been made. After Pastor Kennedy selected Kurt Schmerberg and Lily Tinker Fortel as Stephen Leaders, they attended Stephen Leader training in Pittsburgh from July 30 to August 5. Kurt and Lily spoke glowingly of their experience training with 400 other people whose focus was on Christian caregiving. In the fall, Kurt, Lily, and Pastor Kennedy began introducing the program to the congregation, planned sessions for those interested in learning about being a Stephen Minister, and identified those members who will receive 50 hours of training to become Stephen Ministers. The classes for Stephen Ministers are planned to begin early in 2018, and it is hoped that they will be commissioned on Palm Sunday. The Member Care Team believes that having a Stephen Ministry program will help provide excellent one-on-one care for our members when needed and that it will bring benefits to our entire congregation as they work among us.

Bethlehem Friends has continued to visit those who are homebound or in nursing homes and are able to give Communion. We believe there will be a need for this group in addition to the care the Stephen Ministry program provides. There is a definite need for more members in this group to visit members who do not need or want a Stephen Minister but welcome a visit or would like Communion.

Dindy Haab faithfully continues to update our Prayer Chain each week. Also, Women of Bethlehem continues to organize funeral luncheons for members of the church. Member Care has begun a new group to provide occasional Care Meals in times of need. Ten members of the congregation have indicated their willingness to provide meals. There is a need for good communication among all parts of Bethlehem's care network—Member Care, Pastor John, Bethlehem Friends, Stephen Ministry, Prayer Chain, and Women of Bethlehem—so that all can work closely together to provide the best care for our members.

Early in 2017, the Member Care Team reached out to members whose attendance and participation appeared to have substantially diminished in the past year. Our team members made many phone calls to let members know that they were missed, listen, offer assistance, or provide information about opportunities and activities at Bethlehem.

In accordance with our obligations under the bylaws, in 2017 the Member Care Team undertook an effort to identify and reach out to members who, based on the data we had available, had not been fulfilling the membership responsibilities set forth in the bylaws. In late September, we sent a letter to 56 members who as far as we could tell had shown no church activity since January of 2014. The letter talked about exciting things happening at Bethlehem and encouraged renewed participation. We sought to determine if these individuals were interested in continued membership. The letter specifically stated that if a response was not

received by a particular date, we would understand the individual was not interested in continued membership at Bethlehem. We received six responses and responded to each appropriately.

In December according to our obligations under the bylaws, we sent a detailed report of our process to the Leadership Council. The letter advised that 48 individuals should be removed from the membership rolls because, to the best of our knowledge, they had not attended worship at Bethlehem or participated in Holy Communion at Bethlehem since before January 2014, had not contributed to the church's support or benevolence since before 2014, did not respond to the Member Care Ministry Team's September 2017 letter asking if they were interested in continued membership, or had not made an effort to renew their commitment of membership at Bethlehem since we sent them correspondence in July and September 2015. The Leadership Council accepted our recommendation.

It should be noted that we exempted members over 80 years of age from this process. We acknowledged that some of our members, due to advanced age, disability, living situation, or distance are physically unable to attend worship or otherwise regularly participate in Bethlehem activities. We recognized that many of these people are long-time members who, when they were physically able, participated in the life of Bethlehem and still very much consider themselves Bethlehem members. We tried to fulfill our responsibility prayerfully and, we believe, compassionately.

In February 2017, in time for the beginning of Lent, the Member Care Team sent each Bethlehem family a small daily devotional book, the *Upper Room*. The purpose of this effort was to have shared material during our Lenten journey. It was also a way for our team to reach out to members and express our gratitude for the way Bethlehem members help others. Later in the year, we sent another edition of the *Upper Room* because many members had told us how much they enjoyed receiving it and found the daily Bible reading, devotional, prayer, and thought for the day meaningful. We hoped these materials would provide shared meaning to Advent and encourage members to become involved in Advent activities at Bethlehem.

Donna Whitney continues to keep records of membership. This includes transfers, termination of membership, marriage, deaths, and baptisms. These statistics appear with this report.

I would like to offer a special thank-you to members of our team: Mary Friend, Karen Goforth, Brian Paton, Mary Jean Raab, Judy Coucouvanis (liaison to the Leadership Council), and Pastor Kennedy.

May God continue to guide the work of the Member Care Team in the coming year.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jan Burnham, Chair*

STATISTICAL INFORMATION – 2017

Baptisms

Adult	0
Infant	6

Confirmands	0
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Weddings	5
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Funerals

Members	8
Non-members	3

(Funerals performed by one of our
ministers, even if not at BUCC)

Membership as of December 31, 2016	540
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Additions

Confirmation	0
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Transfer or Affirmation	8
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Losses

Death	13
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Transfer/Drop	8
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Other	48
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Membership as of December 31, 2017	479
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WELCOME MINISTRY TEAM

Members: Kurt Schmerberg, chair; Paul Marshall, Barb Marshall, Gary Kade; and Kris Lovelace, Leadership Council liaison.

Your Welcome Ministry Team has devoted a large portion of this past year to visibly expressing our congregation's commitment to acceptance of all as an expression of Jesus' extravagant love and welcome. We have purchased and installed a permanent cast aluminum plaque depicting our Welcome Covenant for the front of the building; a banner for the front of the sanctuary; and signs placed at various locations around the building. We have purchased and installed a new canopy over the Fifth Avenue entrance and a new front canopy panel for the Fourth Avenue entrance to enhance the Bethlehem identity in our historic neighborhood. We funded the removal of the tree near the Fifth Avenue entrance to make way for the awning installation.

The Welcome Station in the Fourth Avenue vestibule is consistently staffed by Welcome Team members and volunteers to assist visitors every Sunday morning. Your support of our Parking Lot Pretzel ministry provides not only funds for the Welcome Team's special projects but also tasty treats to first-time visitors and a greater recognition of Bethlehem Church as the "House of Bread" in the wider Ann Arbor community.

We hosted a "Welcome Back" student pizza party in the rear greenspace and are developing high-quality printed information packets for potential new members along with mailing and advertising pieces to raise community awareness of our church. New "welcome mats" have been purchased for all four primary entrances to Bethlehem. Our new website has been operational since early this year, a much friendlier, more informative, and easier-to-navigate site. We are exploring collaboration with university students to develop a plan for realizing the vision for our rear greenspace. We funded the attendance for several members of the U-M German Club to our Oktoberfest celebration.

The Bethlehem family has consistently demonstrated its warm, open, and affirming personality to any new face that enters our doors. We are ready when visitors come, but we need you to help us get them here. Our goal is to add at least 12 new members every year. Growing the church is not solely the job of the pastor or the Welcome Team; our entire church family shares in this responsibility.

We need everyone to ask a friend to join us on a Sunday. Spread the word of the mission work we do with Habitat for Humanity; 65 years of local radio worship broadcasts; our support of Alpha House and Peace Neighborhood Center and the meals at Delonis Center. Tell them we are the home of *Groundcover News*, Hops and Hallelujahs, a Living Nativity, and Oktoberfest. For more than 184 years, we have been working for social justice, welcoming immigrants, helping refugees, and serving our God.

Submitted by Kurt Schmerberg, Chair

OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

Bethlehem UCC has a solid history of charity and hands-on volunteering, both locally and beyond. In fact, it is written in our church's core values: "Reaching out to our members, community, country, and the world through support and service."

Early in 2017 I began my role as the newly elected Outreach Ministry Team chairperson by meeting with our church leadership not only to learn about the history of the ministry, but to also gain insight and input for the near future of outreach at Bethlehem. We set a goal of concentrating our energy and deepening our impact. One important factor in determining where to focus our energies and monies was to better understand the current needs in our wider community. Outside of spiritual guidance, what are those in need seeking most from our church? Shelter? Food? Safety? How are we able to best meet those needs with the limited resources on hand? Directly funding individuals as they come forth asking for financial aid to cover their needs? Or better yet, connecting the individuals and families in need with our longtime agency partners already providing the appropriate services?

In answer to these questions, we identified four local organizations to partner with this year. Bethlehem's 2017 "Community Partner Organizations" are Alpha House/Interfaith Hospitality Network, Food Gatherers, Peace Neighborhood Center, and SafeHouse Center. These agencies are included on our church's "short list" of contacts for assisting those who enter our house of worship seeking emergency help with access to food, shelter, and safety resources, as well as many other human-service-related needs.

Bethlehem's Outreach Ministry Team was fortunate to have been entrusted with sharing a portion of our dedicated outreach funds for many years. We shared our blessings and gifted a one-time contribution of \$3500 to help support the programming and services the community (and Bethlehem UCC) so confidently relies on.

We also recognize there are many other deserving causes (social justice, free clothing and furnishings, home building, etc.) and we continued to support them in other ways: individual and group volunteering, special projects, and individual and group fundraisers. Some examples of those activities include the Education Ministry Team's Washtenaw Refugee Welcome, Ruth Ellis Center, and Ozone House mission projects; the Habitat For Humanity trip led by Lily during the month of August (see more in the Spiritual Growth and Development report); Jesse Wilcox stepping up to host the Journey of Hope bicycle tour group in July; and participation by a dozen church members in the annual CROP Hunger Walk in October. The Outreach Ministry Team commends all the BUCC ministries for their dedication to helping those in need and fully supporting those missions.

By selecting fewer partner organizations to work with during 2017, the Outreach Ministry Team was able to focus our available volunteer energy to better match our church's beliefs and meet the needs of our surrounding neighborhood. Self-identified lead volunteers for our selected partner agencies were Sue & Roy Muir, longtime volunteers with Peace Neighborhood Center; Tom Ziesemer (Faith & Food Garden at Bethlehem Cemetery), Mike Haab (produce and nonperishable food collections), and Jamie Dylenski and Ron & Alice

Dechert (Community Kitchen volunteers)—all dedicated to the various supported volunteer activities with Food Gatherers; Mary Jean Raab, who stepped forward to connect with SafeHouse Center to learn more about possible volunteer opportunities for Bethlehem members; and Laura Seyfried (taking over from former liaison Stacey Stites) to coordinate volunteers for IHN Alpha House (dinner and children’s activity time quarterly throughout the calendar year). Additional team members included liaisons from other ministry groups: Sue Wortman from Leadership Council; Jane Nicholson Schmerberg and Eileen Koprowski from the Education Ministry Team; and staff members Pastor John Kennedy and Lily Tinker Fortel. Outside of the actual volunteer engagement, members of the Outreach Ministry Team attended special events sponsored by the funded agencies. I was invited to attend the World Peace Conference in Ann Arbor in April, an opportunity to discuss current social challenges facing people around the globe. The team attended Food Gatherers volunteer recognition event in May, meeting with their staff and touring their facility. Some members also attended Food Gatherers annual fundraiser “Grillin’” in June. As liaison to IHN Alpha House, I began attending their volunteer coordinator meetings to learn more about the organization and develop a closer relationship with their staff. Finally, as guests of the Muirs, Lily Tinker Fortel and I were invited to attend Peace Neighborhood Center’s “Thanks for Giving” recognition and fundraising event in November, giving us an in-person opportunity to meet the staff and volunteers who do great work at the organization we support.

During 2017 the Outreach Ministry Team page on the new BUCC website was created, with the hands-on help of Lily Tinker Fortel, to highlight all of Bethlehem’s outreach work, providing online links to funded agencies and projects as well as sign-up sheets for regular volunteer engagement. The Outreach Ministry Team also began working to bring representatives from each of our funded agencies to share a Mission Moment or short presentation about their work and with our congregation. That project is ongoing.

As the current leader of Bethlehem’s Outreach Ministry Team, I invite you to contact me or any other team member directly with questions or comments about our activities and opportunities. We hope that you will join us in “Reaching out to our members, community, country, and the world through support and service.”

Laura Seyfried, 2017 Outreach Ministry Team Chair

Team members: Jamie Dylenski, Lily Tinker Fortel, Pastor John Kennedy, Eileen Koprowski, Roy & Sue Muir, Mary Jean Raab, Jane Nicholson Schmerberg, and Sue Wortman

FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY TEAM

Our membership consists of Debbie Belcher, Jan Eadie, Sue Irwin, Kris Lovelace, and Jane Ziesemer, chair.

January 7, 2017: De-Greening the Church:

We had a wonderful team of people who helped take down and store all the decorations that once again beautified our building during the Advent and Christmas season. Thank you one and all!

Jan and Samantha Eadie	Fred Castenholz
Jim and Sallie Stadel	Pam Widmayer
Kris and Scott Lovelace	Jesse Wilcox
Bob and Michelle Loukotka	Mike Haab
Brian, Sheila, and Jake Paton	Cresson Slotten
Eric Bowers	Sue and John Irwin

Monthly Veterans' Breakfast Organized by Tom Ziesemer

During 2017, Bethlehem UCC veterans met the first Friday of each month at the Classic Cup Café for breakfast. We had approximate 12–18 military veterans and friends share their stories and enjoy fellowship together. One such story was hearing about Paul (Buzz) Neeb's participation in the "National Veterans Awareness Ride."

We enjoyed a presentation by two veterans from the Fisher House Foundation of Michigan. The Foundation holds an annual fundraiser at Hill Auditorium. Bethlehem donated space in our sanctuary for their rehearsals. Bethlehem also donated funds from Oktoberfest and our veterans' luncheon.

Dave Gilmore introduced us to the "Wreaths across America" program. This program's mission, To Remember, Honor and Teach, is carried out by coordinating a wreath-laying ceremony at Arlington National Cemetery.

February 28, 2017: Hops and Hallelujahs

Another wonderful evening of dining and singing at Conor O'Neill's. There were 70 plus in attendance. Thank you to Tom Ziesemer for organizing; the Wannabes & Steve Darr, Val Jaskiewicz, Dennis Huibregtse, Sarah Herwick, Mark Herwick, and Mary Ann Folk for playing and leading us in song; and Jim Stadel for helping with sound and equipment. Special thanks to Sarah Herwick, first for organizing the youth and second for providing several duets alongside her brother-in-law.

April 9, 2017: Palm Sunday Brunch

Another huge success with around 100 in attendance. We had a sign-up for food donations, which turned out to be full of variety and plentiful. Thank you to the following: Jan Eadie, Sue Muir, Kris & Scott Lovelace, Paul Marshall, Deb Belcher & Gary Bengtson, Sue & John Irwin, Linda Young, Marj Alber, Jan Burnham, Sherry Marcy & Nancy Quay, and Kathy Warner & Dave Gilmore for helping with setup, kitchen work, cleanup, etc. Easter egg dying was available, and the youth sold cookies as a fundraiser for their youth mission project. We raised \$355 in the freewill offering, which also went to the youth project.

April 16, 2017: Easter Sunday

Tom Ziesemer provided a mini “coffee time” before the 10:00 service beginning at 9:15. It provided an opportunity for fellowship prior to the service. The Fellowship Ministry Team provided coffee and light breakfast items for the choir and orchestra in the choir room. These were greatly appreciated.

June 4, 2017: Education Ministry Team Picnic

Fellowship teamed with Education for their end-of-year outdoor picnic. We provided hotdogs (some vegan), buns (some gluten-free), condiments, ice cream cups, and water and lemonade. Excellent turnout and all had fun.

September 10, 2017: Golf Outing

Our annual golf outing was held at Brookside Golf Club. Forty golfers participated this year. Dinner following golf was put on by Brookside. It was a beautiful and fun day all the way around. Fellowship thanked Tom Ziesemer for organizing the event and Chuck & Patti Judson for donating and putting together the 40 gift bags, one for each golfer. A BIG thank-you also went to the following for their generous donations: Knight’s Steakhouse, Metzger’s, Holiday’s, Uptown Coney Island, and the Classic Cup Café; John & Jane Schneider for gift cards to Panera Bread; several other items donated by members of the Tuesday golf groups; and Mike Johnson of Brookside for donating golf certificates and making sure the course was ready. Jane Ziesemer and Patti Maki had fun driving a golf cart around to capture photos of the day.

October 7, 2017: Oktoberfest

The committee consisted of Debbie Belcher, Jan Eadie, Cheryl Grant, Harriett Holzapfel, Sue Irwin, Kris Lovelace, Michelle Loukotka, Sue Muir, and Tom Ziesemer. Sue Muir made the tickets, fliers, and posters and advertised to area churches. Decorations were done by Kris & Scott Lovelace, Pam Widmayer, and Jane Z. Bob Walker and Paul Marshall headed the kitchen team. Harriett Holzapfel headed the spatzens makers. Grillers were Paul Marshall and Jane & Kurt Schmerberg. There were over 31 other volunteers who helped make this event a HUGE success. We had approximately 200 adults and children in attendance. Stevie D and the Wannabes certainly set the tone for the evening along with the amazing decorations. Thank you, Kris Lovelace, for your creative mind. We had a net profit of \$2074.28, so \$220 went to Fisher House and \$1854.28 went to Facilities.

November 12, 2017: Veterans' Luncheon

We honored our veterans on Sunday with a luncheon. Sign-up sheets provided a wonderful variety of salads, and we ordered Kroger sandwich platters. There were about 85 in attendance. Our freewill offering of \$252 went to Fisher House.

November 30, 2017: Christmas Decorating Prep

Thursday evening the following folks took out of storage our Christmas decorations and placed them in their appropriate places as well as put together the Christmas tree in the sanctuary:

Brian Paton	Mike Haab	Chloe Schmerberg	Camille Conrad
Cresson Slotten	Kurt Schmerberg	Abby Bower	
Jan Eadie	Jim Stadel	C.J. Slotten	
Tom & Jane Ziesemer	Ryleigh Jaworski	Lily Tinker Fortel	

Pizza, salad, and beverages were available for all. A big thank- you. This always helps us get off to a good start the actual day we decorate.

December 2, 2017: Decorating the Church

The following folks decorated our beautiful church:

Tom Ziesemer (Jane went home sick)	Sue & Roy Muir
Jan Eadie	John Irwin
Gary Bengtson & Debbie Belcher	Julie Feldkamp
Pam & Fred Castenholz	Jennifer Vasquez
Jim & Sallie Stadel	Kathy Warner
Bob & Michele Loukotka	Dave Gilmore
Kathy Marx and her granddaughter	

Fellowship provided donuts, juice, and coffee. These folks did a wonderful job! Thank you so much!

December 7, 2017 - Women's Advent Evening

The evening was another huge success. Over 90 women were present with 14 hosting tables. After enjoying all the many wonderful appetizers and desserts, we enjoyed Gail Jennings on piano and P.J. Lindemann leading us in Christmas carols. P.J. also sang the lovely Christmas song O Holy Night. It was truly a magical evening.

Coffee Connection and Treats

I want to thank the 30 volunteers who every Sunday make sure the Coffee Connection is ready to go following each worship. A sign-up sheet is always posted outside the office for at least two volunteers to provide a snack to go along with our coffee after the 10:00 service. The 8:30 folks handle their own. We had another successful year. Thanks to all who provided the many delicious treats.

*Respectfully submitted,
Jane Ziesemer, Chair*

YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY

The Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development oversaw this area of Bethlehem's work in 2017. The position of Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team chair was not filled in 2017. Katie Rowan has been elected the Youth and Young Adult Ministry chair for 2018. She will work with the Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development to fill the team in 2018.

See the 2017 report from the Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development for activities and programs involving youth and young adults.

OPEN AND AFFIRMING (ONA) STANDING COMMITTEE

On May 22, 2016, the congregation voted to approve our Covenant of Welcome and declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation.

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.

In December 2016 the Leadership Council established the Open and Affirming (ONA) Standing Committee. The Committee is made up of members of the following ministry teams: Education; Worship; Member Care; Welcome; Outreach; Fellowship; and Youth and Young Adults. Members of the Finance and Facilities teams may be included on the committee if deemed necessary. The committee is to meet at least quarterly and is to discuss and assess Bethlehem's progress and programs related to fulfilling our Covenant of Welcome.

Following the establishment of the ONA Standing Committee, the ONA Task Force (formed in November 2014 by the Leadership Council and facilitated by the 17-month ONA process) met for the last time in January 2017. Many of the members decided to continue as members of the new committee. The ONA Standing Committee met for the first time on April 27, 2017, and then on July 13, and October 26.

The committee continues to monitor progress and programs related to fulfilling our Covenant of Welcome, including:

- The Welcome Ministry Team's efforts to prominently display our Covenant of Welcome with plaques and banners on the interior and exterior of the church and other ONA messaging such as including rainbow banner graphics on the canopies at the 5th Avenue and 4th Avenue entrances and displaying a very large rainbow flag inside the 5th Avenue entrance
- Reviewing and providing input on the new BUCC website as it was being developed
- The Education Ministry Team at the suggestion of the youth deciding to support the Ruth Ellis Center, an organization that supports marginalized youth, particularly LGBTQ youth
- Staying aware of efforts throughout the church, such as possible ways to broaden worship music with even more inclusive language, and looking to include nongender restrooms in future building renovations
- Providing programs and events to fulfill our Covenant of Welcome, including celebrating the anniversary of the ONA vote, movie events, and the ONA speaker event on February 11, 2018, with our friend U-M grad student Ben Hollenbach

*Respectfully submitted,
Cresson Sloten, Chair*

STEPHEN MINISTRY REPORT

In 2015, the Member Care Ministry Team began talking about how to enhance Bethlehem's care of its members. A suggestion was made to research the Stephen Series' "Stephen Ministry Program" for Bethlehem UCC. Bethlehem's Leadership Council approved the Member Care Ministry's proposal. Rev. John Kennedy was already a trained Stephen Leader and Stephen Minister who had participated in launching a Stephen Ministry Program at his former congregation.

Kurt Schmerberg and Lily Tinker Fortel were selected as Stephen Leaders and were sent to Pittsburgh during the summer of 2017 to be trained as trainers of Stephen Ministers. The cost of the training was funded by the pastor's discretionary funds from the McKay Community Fund. Bethlehem's Stephen Leader Team is made up of Kurt, Lily, and Pastor John.

In the fall of 2017, the Stephen Leader Team began meeting weekly to create an education and awareness program to introduce Stephen Ministry to the congregation. Dates were set for the beginning of a training class for selected Stephen Ministers. Classes were scheduled to begin in the first week of January 2018. The class was scheduled to meet until all 52 hours of training had been completed, projected to be sometime in March 2018. We looked forward to commissioning Bethlehem's first class of Stephen Ministers in March 2018.

Thank you to the Member Care Ministry for supporting the Stephen Ministry program and its Stephen Ministers. Thank you to the Leadership Council for endorsing this promising new ministry of Christ-centered care.

A Just World for All

United in Christ's Love!

Kurt Schmerberg, Lily Tinker Fortel, Rev. John Kennedy

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE

The 2017 Nominations Committee was comprised of Cress Slotten, Kathy Warner and Della DiPietro (chair). The Committee brought these nominations to the Annual Meeting on Jan. 28, 2018, and all individuals were elected.

Leadership Council

John Samford	President
Sue Wortman	Secretary
Shannon O'Reilly	Treasurer
Julie Feldkamp	Member At Large

Cemetery Board

Jim Lutz	Elected Member
Jerry Sutfin	Elected Member

Finance Ministry Team

Karen Samford	Elected Member
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Member Care Ministry Team

Jenny Foster	Chair
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Youth/Young Adult Ministry Team

Katie Rowan	Chair
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Nominations Committee

Della DiPietro	Chair
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We wish to acknowledge and thank those who are leaving elected office this month for their dedicated service to Bethlehem Church: Sue Buday as President, Jan Burnham as Chair - Member Care Ministry Team; and Mike Haab, Cemetery Board.

Also we wish to thank these people who left elected office earlier: Jane Conlen, Finance Ministry; Paul Marshall, Cemetery Board; and Isaac Wilcox, Youth/Young Adult Ministry.

Della DiPietro, Chair

OPERATING BUDGET COMPARISON

BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST 2017 OPERATING BUDGET COMPARISON

	2017 Budget	2017 Actual	Prior Year	2017 % Used
REVENUES				
Current Offerings	347,989	332,861	357,027	96%
Special Offerings	12,500	8,053	12,062	64%
FundRaising	4,200	3,793	4,788	90%
Rent Income (Parking, House, Building)	46,300	40,260	45,481	87%
Grocery Rewards	1,500	1,015	1,584	68%
Software Maintenance	4,320	4,320	4,320	100%
Feldkamp Fund	3,000	3,000	3,000	100%
Misc Income	0	3,510	1,983	
Parking/Football & Art Fair Fund Raising	6,863	5,839	1,000	85%
McKay Building Endowment/Bequests	24,300	24,300	24,300	100%
TOTAL REVENUE	450,972	426,951	455,545	95%
EXPENSES				
OUTREACH	14,100	14,000	14,092	99.29%
DENOMINATIONAL GIVING	15,672	15,672	14,172	100.00%
PERSONNEL	296,541	284,510	277,799	95.94%
CHRISTIAN ED COMMISSION	2,550	1,466	2,988	57.49%
WORSHIP/ MUSIC	18,735	15,288	13,725	81.60%
WELCOME MINISTRY	6,150	3,558	2,385	57.85%
FELLOWSHIP	850	667	765	78.47%
FINANCE	2,800	2,115	2,489	75.54%
FACILITIES	149,224	139,507	119,447	93.49%
ADMINISTRATION	36,598	34,556	35,961	94.42%
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL	1,250	38	1,261	3.04%
MEMBER CARE	3,991	1,660	448	41.59%
YOUTH/ YOUNG ADULT	5,076	2,442	1,146	48.11%
BUDGET EXPENSE TOTAL	553,537	515,479	486,678	93.12%
TOTAL BUDGET REVENUE	450,972	426,951	455,545	
NET INCOME	(102,565)	(88,528)	(31,133)	

MEMORIAL & GIFT ACCOUNTS

Bethlehem United Church of Christ Memorial & Gift Accounts December 31, 2017

<u>Fund Name</u>	<u>Balance 1/1/2017</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Balance 12/31/2017</u>
<u>Education Ministry</u>				
Church School Fund	15,271.65	11,252.00	1,534.89	24,988.76
<i>Total Education Ministry</i>	15,271.65	11,252.00	1,534.89	24,988.76
<u>Facilities Ministry</u>				
Feldkamp	13,275.38	12,806.28	25,383.21	698.45
Gym	118.07		118.07	0.00
Property Improvement	10,176.00	15,736.75	19,360.42	6,552.33
Restroom Renovations	2,664.29	758.49	3,422.78	0.00
Heating & A/C Renovation	410.00	1,309.00	813.00	906.00
Sanctuary Restoration	0.00	116,038.72	1,000.00	115,038.72
Parsonage Renovation	4,222.37		6,243.65	(2,021.28)
<i>Total Facilities Ministry</i>	30,866.11	146,649.24	56,341.13	121,174.22
<u>Finance Ministry</u>				
Brewster Estate Fund	1,895.69	0.00	0.00	1,895.69
General Memorial	46,445.65	110,332.39	141,718.49	15,059.55
Kulenkamp Trust	4,191.51	0.00	0.00	4,191.51
Special Projects Fund - Welcome	11,115.26	15,689.80	9,739.69	17,065.37
Tree of Life	13,872.05	2,450.00	25.00	16,297.05
<i>Total Finance Ministry</i>	77,520.16	128,472.19	151,483.18	54,509.17
<u>Worship/Music Ministry</u>				
Alternative Worship	1,853.94	135.09	0.00	1,989.03
Bethlehem Bridges	161.60	0.00	161.60	0.00
Handbell	1,035.03	0.00	0.00	1,035.03
Music/Choir	848.96	311.60	0.00	1,160.56
Organ	7,086.90	0.00	0.00	7,086.90
Radio	12,954.56	17,694.00	12,000.00	18,648.56
<i>Total Worship/Music Ministry</i>	23,940.99	18,140.69	12,161.60	29,920.08
<u>Cemetery Board</u>				
Cemetery Maintenance	(52.00)	23,046.00	22,994.00	0.00
<i>Total Cemetery Board</i>	(52.00)	23,046.00	22,994.00	0.00
<u>Youth Ministry</u>				
Intergenerational Mission	0.00	5,696.28	392.18	5,304.10
Youth	0.00	20,209.93	152.64	20,057.29
<i>Total Youth Ministry</i>	0.00	25,906.21	544.82	25,361.39
Totals	147,546.91	353,466.33	245,059.62	255,953.62

CASH & INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS

CASH AND INVESTMENT ACCOUNTS

December 31, 2017

<u>Fund Name</u>	<u>Cash</u>	<u>Investments</u>	<u>TOTAL in BOAA</u>
General	26,418.19		26,418.19
Memorials and Gifts	255,953.62		255,953.62
McKay Endowment Income	21,552.84		21,552.84
General Endowment Principal		435,600.00	435,600.00
Building Endowment	Principal and Income	99,714.00	99,714.00
Kusterer		22,334.00	22,334.00
Hutzel		36,117.00	36,117.00
Unrestricted Investment Assets		569,030.74	569,030.74

Bank of Ann Arbor:

<u>TOTAL</u>	303,924.65	1,162,795.74	1,466,720.39
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Permanently Restricted Funds held in trust for BUCC which are not accounted for
on our books:

Endowment	McKay	JP Morgan	987,964.38
Scholarship	McKay	JP Morgan	267,783.59
Building	Feldkamp	PNC	287,192.54

YOUTH MINISTRY ACCOUNTS

Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Youth Ministry Accounts
December 31, 2017

<u>Fund Name</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>1/1/2017</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Disbursements</u>	<u>Balance</u> <u>12/31/2017</u>
Youth Fellowship	\$15,991.23	\$100.00	\$16,091.23	\$0.00
Youth Mission	\$3,463.28	\$0.00	\$3,463.28	\$0.00
Youth Musical	\$3,750.58	\$0.00	\$3,750.58	\$0.00
Totals	\$23,205.09	\$100.00	\$23,305.09	\$0.00

These accounts were moved in September, 2017 to Memorial & Gift accounts

MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

MEMORIALS

BELL FUND

Marshall, Larry

CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND

Zahn, David

CHURCH SCHOOL FUND

Marshall, Larry

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Akers, Betty
Baumann, Helen Schmale
Caswell, Marian
Ferri, Carolyn
Gilbert, Bill
Grob, Norm & Helen
Holliday, Martha
Keppler, Fred & Lela
Kleinschmidt, Vera & Harold
Lovelace, Elsie
Marshall, Larry
Perros, Joan
Pollee, Waldemar & Marianne
Schlanderer, Charles
Schmale, Eve
Schmale, Rev. & Mrs.
Seitz, Virginia
Steinaway, L. Dean
Wenk, Kevin Paul
Zahn, David

MUSIC/CHOIR FUND

Seitz, Virginia
Zahn, David

HEATING AND A/C IMPROVEMENT FUND

Marshall, Larry

PROPERTY

IMPROVEMENT FUND

Diuble, Betty
Diuble, Wilbert
Dotson, Sandy
Fellenberger, Bill
Gentner, Ron
Hanson, Eldean & Lillian
Hentz, Gary
Kennedy, Ron & Julia
Lovelace, Elsie
Marshall, Larry
McLaughlin, Hilda
Nimz, John E.
O'Reilly, John
O'Reilly, Laura
Seitz, Virginia
Soper, Lois (Kempfert)

RADIO FUND

Caswell, Marian
Deverick, Margaret
Keppler
Eisemann, Waldo & Norma
Ferri, Carolyn
Haeussler, Lois
Helbig, Alethea
Jahnke, Mary
Keppler, Godfrey
Marshall, Larry
Paul, Geraldine
Rutledge, Donald
Saunders, Gladys
Seitz, Virginia

RESTROOM RENOVATION FUND

Keppler, Frederick & Lela

TREE OF LIFE

Caswell, Marian
Marshall, John & Erma
Marshall, Larry
Rutledge, Donald

YOUTH PROGRAM

Caswell, Marian
Marshall, Larry

WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM

Caswell, Marian

RADIO BROADCAST SPONSORSHIP

Haeussler, Lois M.
Helbig, Alethea
Jahnke, Art & Erna
Jahnke, Shorty & Mary
Jaworowski, Laura Ann
Jaworowski, Ron
Keppler, Frederick & Lela
Milidonis, James
Scherdt, Edward & Lenore
Scherdt, Erwin & Lucille
Scherdt, Stanley & Betty
Seyfried, Frederick J.
Seyfried, Nancy Lynn
Stein, Lorena
Wahl, Wilma

HONORARIUMS

CURRENT FUND

Dresselhouse, Raelin

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Loukotka, Michelle
Muir, Sue
Foster, Norma & Conrad
Schmale, Jim

RADIO BROADCAST SPONSORSHIP

Slotten, Cresson
Seyfried, Marion

TREE OF LIFE

Parking Lot Pretzel Volunteers

BETHLEHEM CEMETERY BOARD

During 2017 the Cemetery Board continued its efforts to develop a multiyear capital-improvements plan for the cemetery grounds. Capital expenditures included replacement of two long sections of roadway, replacing the fence behind the building, completely replacing the electric wiring in the building, designing and posting a website for the cemetery, and completing a website called Find-a-Grave. The websites were all accomplished with the work of the board members and office staff, plus volunteers from the church, specifically Carl Waltjen and Karen and John Samford. We also designed a pamphlet for the cemetery and distributed it this past spring to local funeral homes, nursing home administrators, and various places in the church that are readily available to our membership and visitors. In addition, the board has kept monthly expenses about equal with those of 2016.

Our financial statement for the year shows that we have a loss of \$23,500. We received an anonymous gift of \$20,000 late this year or we would have had a loss of \$43,000, which was the cost of the new roads. Our trust-account investments are performing better than in the past few years, so we are in fairly good shape financially. However, after reviewing the financial statements and knowing that some of our burial expenses will be increasing in 2018, the board has decided to increase prices beginning January 2018.

Brad Bouchie is our new sexton, having begun in September. Brad mows the lawns for the church, so he is familiar to us and is doing well at the cemetery. This coming year, we are preparing to plant trees in the new block of the cemetery and to replace trees lost due to age and damage from last winter's windstorm. With that in mind, we would be pleased to accept gifts and memorials for trees in 2018. Anyone wishing to give a gift of a tree may choose from a list of trees that have been determined to be good choices for a cemetery, and the cemetery board and sexton will help the donor decide where to place it.

The board is hoping that the above improvements and those planned for the next few years will enhance revenues for the cemetery as well as beautify the grounds of our very lovely historic cemetery.

*Respectfully submitted,
Marilyn B. Pearson, President*

BETHLEHEM CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

		December 31, 2017	
		Checking Account	
Balance January 1, 2017			\$227.47
Receipts:			
	Sales: Lots		\$33,600.00
	Sales: Niches		\$18,800.00
	Burials		\$38,370.00
	Engraving		\$615.00
	Deed Transfer		\$135.00
	Interest		\$11.09
	Contributions/Memorials		\$22,994.00
	Receipt Total		\$114,525.09
	Transfer in from Trust Account		\$61,000.00
	Columbariums		\$4,711.20
Disbursements:			
	Office Secretary		\$3,600.00
	Grounds Maintenance Contract		\$39,294.00
	Openings & Closing Fees		\$13,575.00
	Software Maintenance		\$720.00
	Columbarium Amortization		\$4,711.20
	Cemetery Supplies		\$0.00
	Scrolls and Engraving		\$3,805.49
	Telephone & Internet		\$1,678.03
	Utilities		\$5,284.76
	Office/Building Supplies		\$6,286.86
	Road Maintenance		\$43,600.59
	Trees & Shrubs		\$5,232.00
	Grounds Maintenance		\$4,955.93
	Storm Damage		\$1,760.00
	Website		\$520.00
	Insurance		\$889.12
	Commission on Sales		\$5,240.00
	Dumpster		\$1,055.00
	Disbursement Total		\$142,207.98
	Haarer Fund grave blankets		(\$91.50)
	Monument Repair		(\$550.00)
	Perpetual Care Transfers		\$7,860.00
	BALANCE December 31, 2017		\$30,854.28
	Graves/Niches Sold		52
	Openings/Closings		61
	Perpetual Care Account Balance		\$688,747.79

WOMEN OF BETHLEHEM



Marian Caswell
6/4/1926 - 4/11/2017

Marian Caswell was most active on our Board as the Kitchen Supervisor. She was the person who oversaw the kitchen in general and also recruited, over the years, hundreds of volunteers to help prepare and serve meals at our church. No matter what the occasion was, you could count on Marian to be in the kitchen or serving area giving direction to volunteers. She was also a member of the Holy Rollers.

Marian was very active in the Community Red Cross and also promoted dozens of CPR Training Classes through the Red Cross for our congregation. She not only promoted them but also gave the training herself. So many in our congregation learned this life-saving skill because of Marian.

Marian would give you the “shirt off her back.” She was always ready to listen and then determine how she could help. She gave countless rides to members and friends to the worship services and events. Her German potato salad and pecan pie were always sought out at church meals!

She will be sorely missed, and we are eternally grateful for the many years she was part of our lives.



Since the Women's Fellowship inception in 1917, it has been rich with a historical background that has been one of the foundations of our church and congregation. We ended our program year in 2017 continuing to discuss and find ways for women in our congregation to be involved and supported by our Board and existing groups.

The Annual Bazaar/Luncheon was held on Friday, November 11. Profits were dispersed as follows: \$536 to the Women's Treasury, \$536 to Peace Neighborhood Center, \$536 to Food Gatherers, and \$1,072 to Bethlehem's Property Improvement Fund.

We continue to provide funeral luncheons for members of our congregation. A special thank you to the hard-working women who help organize and serve the funeral luncheons. It's a most meaningful ministry that our women are able to provide for families at a difficult time in their lives.

Pat O'Reilly coordinated the assembling of Bethlehem Bags for Mott Hospital with the Auxiliary/Mother's Study Circle.

The Board approved the purchase of 16 white round tablecloths and 5 rectangular tablecloths to be used in our Dining Room for funeral luncheons and other functions.

In loving memory of Marian Caswell, the Board has purchased a Leaf for the Bethlehem Tree of Life to read as follows: "Marian Caswell - Her selfless service inspired all of us. Women of Bethlehem"

I want to lift up the Holy Rollers. Generally, they make pretzels the second Saturday of most months. From their profits this year, they gave \$3,000 to the Parsonage Renovation Fund. Also, they hold \$25 each time they sell pretzels to help cover the cost of shipping and support for Church World Service kits. Thank you to these committed volunteers!

Our Board continues to hope for the development of more small groups for women in our congregation. We are committed to help make this happen.

I want to thank the current Board members: Dindy Haab, Laura Seyfried, Michelle Loukotka, Pat O'Reilly, Gert Eisele, Jacquie Katz, and Debbie Karr. Their dedication and support have been tremendous throughout this past year.

We welcome any discussions, input, or ideas that women of our congregation would like to share with us.

Special thanks to Shannon O'Reilly who had to resign from our Board this past year due to work commitments.

We value her service and commitment for so many years as our Kitchen and Material Aids Coordinator. Thank you, Shannon!

And thank you to all the incredible women of this congregation who continue to give so much of their time, dedication, and talents to our programs and groups.



Auxiliary/Mother's Study Circle

Co-Presidents: Gert Eisele and Jan Burnham

Secretary: Mary Friend

Treasurer: Evelyn Steinaway

Our purpose is to stimulate and promote interest and activity in spiritual, social, and educational development.

We meet September – May, the third Wednesday at 1:00 PM. We have about 10 – 12 members attending each month.

Our main service project is to collect, assemble, pack, and ship school, and health kits to Church World Service. Thank you to members of the congregation who have helped with the project. We also packed 60 Bethlehem Bags for the parents of patients at Mott Hospital.

Members of Auxiliary/Mother's Study also help to set up the dining room for Women of Bethlehem events.

Our monthly programs for years 2016 – 2017 were as follows:

September	Salad potluck luncheon and preparation for Church World Service kits
October	Assemble, pack, mail kits for CWS 74 School Kits & 72 Health Kits
November	Totenfest
December	Cookie Exchange, Christmas Game
January	Speaker from Ele's Place
February	No meeting
March	Small concert by Gail Jennings
April	Assemble Bethlehem Bags for Mott Children's Hospital
May	Birthday Celebration – salad luncheon and cake

We would like to thank Pat O'Reilly for printing our meeting booklet this year and for obtaining material and sewing the bags for Church World Service. We are also grateful to Lois Haeussler who has given generously throughout the year to help our group projects. We are also grateful to the Holy Rollers who donate \$25 of profits each month for postage and fees for CWS kits.

Devotions led by our members are an integral part of each meeting.



Bethlehem Star Bazaar
November 11, 2016

Tickets

We sold a total of 124 tickets; roughly 76 turkey and 30 beef. (Some meals were purchased in the dining room without tickets to document choices.) Prior to the day of the Bazaar we sold 63 tickets. We sold 9 more tickets than last year.

Salads

~Broccoli Salad, Hilda: 6x (2 large bowls) used 1 bowl

~Asian Coleslaw, Debbie: 6 pounds cabbage, 4x dressing and crunchies, used half

~Peas & Peanut, Jacquie: 4x (1 large bowl), ? used

~Cranberry Jell-O: Michelle: 4x (4 7x13 pans), used little more than half

~Pasta, Sue: 4x (2 large bowls $\frac{3}{4}$ full) used 1 bowl

~Tossed, Kathy: (1 extra large bowl), used less than 1 large bowl

Food

Bob purchased 3 top round beef roasts and 12 turkey breasts. We had 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ pans of beef, 3 pans of potatoes and unknown number of pans of turkey. After serving the luncheon there were 2 pans of beef, 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ pans of turkey and 1 pan of potatoes left over. One pan of turkey and the pan of potatoes was donated to Peace Neighborhood Center. Ticket sales and food sales brought in \$694.85, which is about \$80 more than last year.

Bazaar Sale

Even though Christmas donations were down, this room brought in \$856.50, which is more than any of the past 3 years.

Artisans

We had 5 artists who brought in a total of \$120 for table rental. Two of the artists were not happy with their sales and two were very happy.

Bake Sale

Donations were about the same as last year. However, more of the traditional German cookies are needed since they tend to sell out first. The bake sale brought in \$1,129.76, which is about \$264 more than last year.

Quilts

We had 14 quilts donated for the display, which is about the same as previous years. This room also provided a pleasant place for people to gather. The quilt raffle brought in \$256 which is about \$100 less than last year. Nancy Gentner won the quilt.

Conclusions

There were lots of positive comments made regarding the fun and fellowship the Bazaar provided. Everyone seemed to enjoy spending the day together. In addition to all the positive energy, we generated \$2,679.87 which is \$157.21 more than last year.

We were able to donate

\$1,071.93 to the BUCC Property Improvement Fund

\$535.96 each to: Women of Bethlehem,
Food Gathers,
and Peace Neighborhood

Considerations for Next Year

- ~Reduce salad amounts
- ~Increase salad number by purchasing Costco salads (kale or quinoa)
- ~Luncheon tickets and bake sale downstairs
- ~Parking attendant
- ~Tear-down committee



Mary Martha Circle

President: Jacquie Katz

Secretary/Treasurer: Harriett Holzapfel

Spiritual Leader: Carolyn Moehrle

Mary Martha Circle meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month from September to May in the church library at 10:00 am. The purpose is for Bible study. We are studying the book of Ephesians. We had no meeting in January do bad weather and no meeting in March as some of our members were out of town. We again gave Peace Neighborhood gift cards for Christmas. Our receipts and disbursements are listed below:

Treasurer's Report

Balance forward 5/10/16	\$ 4.42
Receipts	<u>150.00</u>
Balance	\$154.42
Disbursements	
Women of Bethlehem	\$ 10.00
Women of Bethlehem for mailing kits	10.00
Blanket Sunday	10.00
Peace Neighborhood Center	100.00
To Lily for her projects	<u>10.00</u>
Balance	\$150.00

Balance forward	\$ 4.42
Receipts	<u>150.00</u>
Balance	\$154.42
Disbursements	<u>150.00</u>
Balance	\$ 4.42



Prayer Shawl Ministry
Mary Friend and Debbie Karr

The Prayer Shawl Ministry meets most Mondays from 1:00 to 3:00 in the Schmale Lounge. We have six members who are regular attendees and several others who occasionally drop in to knit. There are many anonymous members who knit at home and turn their projects in to the church office. We are grateful for everyone's contributions.

This year we have provided:

- 7 shawls to members or friends who are grieving or ill
- 30 shawls to nursing homes
- 20 shawls to an anonymous source
- 2 baby shawls for baptisms
- 20 scarves for the Mitten Tree
- 2 hats for the Mitten Tree
- 9 baby blankets for the Pine Ridge Indian Reservation
in partnership with Church of the Good Shepherd



Serving Committee Report
Sue Muir

October 21, 2016 - Virginia Reppenhagen Funeral Luncheon - Michelle Loukotka. We provided six salads and drinks. Friends of the family furnished the desserts.

November 11, 2016 - Geraldine Seyfried Funeral Luncheon - Sue Muir. Family purchased meat/cheese/bread trays. We provided cookies and drinks.

February 18, 2017 - Larry Marshall Funeral Luncheon- Sue Muir, Michelle Loukotka, Jacquie Katz. We provided cookies, cakes, and drinks.

April 22, 2017 - Marian Caswell Funeral Luncheon - Jacquie Katz. Family purchased meat/cheese/bread/fruit trays. We provided veggie trays, salads, cookies/bars and cakes, drinks.

June 16, 2017 - David Zahn Funeral Luncheon - Michelle Loukotka. Family purchased meat/cheese/bread trays. We provided salads, cookies and bars, drinks.

September 24, 2017 - Carolyn Ferri Funeral Luncheon - Sue Muir. Family provided all the food. We provided drinks.

Women of Bethlehem
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Breakdown by Fund
September 1, 2016
Through August 31, 2017

	GENERAL FUND	CW'S KITS	OCWM	COVENANT ASSN	PRETZEL SALES	BAZAAR	SAUER- KRAUT SUPPER	SPECIAL GIFTS	KITCHEN FUND	DINING ROOM	BOOK SALES	SEWING FUND	GRAND
BEGIN BALANCE	3,787.71	304.40	0.00	90.00	3,992.53	0.00	0.00	70.00	428.32	828.71	436.06	228.22	10,165.95
REVENUE	698.96	599.24	10.00	0.00	13,879.00	3,898.51	3,530.00	10,330.00	350.00	150.00	161.91	0.00	33,607.62
BENEVOLENCE	0.00	0.00	(10.00)	0.00	(3,225.00)	(2,679.84)	(2,505.33)	(280.00)	0.00	(336.55)	0.00	0.00	(9,036.72)
EXPENSE	(333.37)	(613.61)	0.00	0.00	(652.64)	(1,218.67)	(1,024.67)	(10,120.00)	(267.80)	0.00	0.00	0.00	(14,230.76)
TOTAL	4,153.30	290.03	0.00	90.00	13,993.89	0.00	0.00	0.00	510.52	642.16	597.97	228.22	20,506.09

Bylaws
of
Bethlehem
United Church of Christ
of Ann Arbor, Michigan



Bethlehem United Church of Christ
Bylaws

Amended January 31, 2016

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Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Bylaws

These Bylaws, along with the Articles of Incorporation, are the foundation for the governance of Bethlehem United Church of Christ.

Article I Name

The name of this organization shall be Bethlehem United Church of Christ of Ann Arbor, Michigan (referred to in these Bylaws as the “Church”).

Article II Purpose

It shall be the purpose of this organization to provide a Christian congregation for worship, to give glory to God, and to promote the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Article III Affiliation

The Church shall be a member of the United Church of Christ and shall be guided by the United Church of Christ’s Constitution and Bylaws.

Article IV Doctrine

The Holy Scriptures of the Bible are the foundation for the Church’s worship and practices.

Article V Membership

Section 1 Eligibility

Membership in the Church shall be open to any person who has been baptized and has either (1) been confirmed into a Christian church or (2) made public confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Section 2 Privileges

1. All members are entitled to share in the fellowship and spiritual blessings of the Church, to the services of the Pastor and any other ordained personnel of the Church, and to the Christian sympathy and support of all other members.
2. All members of the Church in good standing are entitled to voice and vote at meetings of the Governing Body.
3. All members in good standing, who have been members for at least one year, shall be eligible to hold elected office of the Church. No one may simultaneously hold more than one elected office of the Church. Neither the Pastor nor other ordained staff of the Church shall be eligible to hold elected office of the Church.

Section 3 Responsibilities

Members shall participate in the Church's worship and celebration of Holy Communion; share in the life and work of the Church; contribute to the Church's support and benevolence; and support the spiritual welfare of the Church's membership and the community.

Section 4 Release

Any member in good standing shall be granted a letter of transfer upon request.

Section 5 Termination

The Member Care Ministry Team shall every two years, in odd-numbered years, review the membership rolls for the purpose of identifying members who appear to have not met the responsibilities of membership set forth in Section 3. The Member Care Ministry Team shall communicate with the members so identified to encourage their renewed participation in the life of the Church. Should such efforts not result in renewed participation, the Member Care Ministry Team shall recommend to the Leadership Council that the member be removed from the active member rolls. Upon majority vote of the Leadership Council, such member shall be removed from the active member rolls.

Section 6 Others Participating in the Bethlehem Community

Individuals who are unable or otherwise not in a position to become members of the Church are welcome to attend worship, request and receive newsletters and other similar communications from the Church, participate in programs and other events offered by the Church, and otherwise participate in the life of the Church. Such individuals are eligible to serve as unelected members of Ministry Teams, and serve as appointed or volunteer members of task forces or other groups, including those created by the Governing Body, Leadership Council or the Pastor. Such individuals shall have the right to attend congregational meetings and, at the discretion of the President, voice their opinions, but shall not be entitled to vote.

Article VI Governance

Section 1 Governing Body

A. How Assembled

The Governing Body of the Church shall be the members of the Church assembled in a duly called congregational meeting. A quorum shall consist of 25 members. A quorum, once established at a duly called congregational meeting, shall exist until the meeting is adjourned. The Governing Body shall hold an annual meeting and may hold other meetings as set forth in these Bylaws. The vote of a majority of those present and voting at any such congregational meeting shall be the will of the Church.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Governing Body:

1. Shall hold an Annual Meeting as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
2. Shall hold other congregational meetings as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
3. Shall be responsible for calling a Pastor and shall have the right to terminate the Church's relationship with the Pastor.
4. Shall have sole authority to approve unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures of \$15,000.00 or more.
5. Shall have sole authority to approve the purchase or sale of real property.
6. May establish committees, task forces or other groups to further the purposes of the Church.
7. Shall have sole authority to merge with or enter into any agreement of formal association with another congregation.

Section 2 Leadership Council

A. Composition

The Leadership Council shall be a seven-member body, consisting of a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and three at-large members.

At any duly called meeting of the Leadership Council, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the Leadership Council members. Once established at a particular meeting, a quorum exists until the meeting is adjourned.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Leadership Council:

1. Is responsible to the Governing Body.
2. Shall, in consultation with the Pastor, engage in strategic planning for the future of the Church and, in collaboration with the various Ministry Teams, set the overall policy and direction of the Church.
3. Shall work with the Pastor, other staff, the Ministry Teams, and other laypersons to implement that strategic direction.
4. Shall call an Annual Meeting of the Governing Body as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
5. Shall call special meetings of the Governing Body as set forth in Article VIII of these Bylaws.
6. May call other special meetings of the Governing Body at its discretion.
7. Shall meet within two weeks of the Annual Meeting of the Governing Body and shall meet regularly thereafter.

8. Shall keep a record of its proceedings.
9. Shall receive a recommended annual operating budget from the Finance Ministry Team and, upon approval, recommend the operating budget to the congregation.
10. Shall hire any interim Pastor, establish the terms and conditions of employment of any interim Pastor, and have the authority to terminate a relationship with any interim Pastor.
11. Shall establish the terms and conditions of employment of the Pastor. In establishing the financial terms of the Pastor's relationship with the Church, the Leadership Council shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team.
12. Shall establish and provide support to a search committee for a Pastor when there is a vacancy.
13. Shall conduct an annual performance review of the Pastor.
14. Unless otherwise directed by the Governing Body, shall consider and act on recommendations of the Pastor, within the financial parameters established in the budget and the strategic parameters set by the Leadership Council, to call ordained staff or to terminate a relationship with ordained staff.
15. May create committees and task forces to assist in carrying out the Leadership Council's responsibilities or other functions related to the Church.
16. Except as to the office of President, shall, in consultation with Nominations, appoint members to fill vacancies in unexpired terms of elected positions of the Church until the following Annual Meeting.
17. Shall coordinate with Ministry Teams and other groups of the Church considering policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church before any such actions are implemented.
18. Shall establish policies and procedures related to the overall strategic direction of the Church and shall review and revise existing policies and procedures related to the overall strategic direction of the Church. Upon adoption, the Leadership Council shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
19. Shall receive, review and act on requests from any Ministry Team or other group of the Church for unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures greater than \$5,000.00 but less than \$15,000.00. The Leadership Council may approve such requests if in its judgment the request is not an appropriately budgetable expenditure, the financial condition of the Church supports the expenditure, and the request is a valuable expenditure of Church resources. The Leadership Council may request the input of the Finance Ministry Team in making its determination. The Leadership Council shall advise the Governing Body of the request and approval at the next duly called meeting of the Governing Body.
20. Shall receive, review and promptly act on, in accordance with these Bylaws, reports from the Member Care Ministry Team with respect to members not meeting their membership responsibilities.
21. Shall annually, or more often if requested by the Governing Body, provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.
22. Shall serve as the Board of Directors of the Church.

C. President

The President:

1. Shall preside over all congregational meetings.
2. Shall preside over all Leadership Council meetings.
3. Shall, in consultation with the Pastor and other members of the Leadership Council, set the agenda for Leadership Council meetings.
4. Shall serve as a member ex officio of all Ministry Teams and may attend meetings of the various Ministry Teams in consultation with the chair of the various Ministry Teams, offering counsel as appropriate.
5. May delegate his or her responsibility to the Vice President to preside over congregational meetings or Leadership Council meetings should the President be unable to attend.
6. To the extent authorized by the Governing Body or these Bylaws, shall, with the Secretary, sign all deeds and all contracts in excess of \$15,000 on behalf of the Church.

D. Vice President

The Vice President:

1. Shall preside over congregational meetings or Leadership Council meetings upon delegation of the President due to the President's inability to attend.
2. Shall preside over any congregational meeting or portion of such meeting where the business of the meeting pertains to the President.
3. Provides advice and counsel to the Pastor with respect to personnel matters of the Church staff.

E. Secretary

The Secretary:

1. Shall keep a record of all meetings of the Governing Body and the Leadership Council.
2. Shall promptly prepare and distribute minutes of meetings of the Governing Body to the congregation.
3. Shall promptly prepare and distribute minutes of meetings of the Leadership Council to the Leadership Council.
4. Shall serve as a repository for and keep and maintain a current set of policies of the Church.
5. Shall receive, review, and process all official correspondence of the Church.
6. To the extent authorized by the Governing Body or these Bylaws, shall, with the President, sign all deeds and all contracts in excess of \$15,000 on behalf of the Church.

F. Treasurer

The Treasurer:

1. Shall be responsible for all monies of the Church.
2. Shall coordinate regularly with the Finance Ministry Team concerning the finances of the Church.
3. Shall make monthly reports to the Leadership Council concerning the finances of the Church.
4. Shall make an annual report to the Governing Body concerning the finances of the Church.
5. May, in consultation with the Pastor, utilize the support of designated office staff in carrying out the Treasurer's responsibilities.

Section 3 Finance Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Finance Ministry Team shall be composed of three members elected by the Governing Body and such other individuals as the Finance Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities. The Finance Ministry Team shall elect a Chair from its elected members.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Finance Ministry Team:

1. Shall secure the funds necessary and appropriate to support the Church.
2. Shall annually prepare, in consultation with the Leadership Council, other Ministry Teams, the Pastor, and other ordained staff, an operating budget for consideration and approval by the Leadership Council.
3. Shall, after approval by the Leadership Council, present the annual budget to the Governing Body for its consideration.
4. Shall coordinate with and support the Treasurer in fulfilling the Treasurer's roles and responsibilities.
5. Shall encourage giving toward and oversee the Church's monetary funds, including Memorials and Gifts, investments, and any endowment funds.
6. Shall ensure that the monetary funds of the Church are prudently invested.
7. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out the Finance Ministry Team's roles and responsibilities.
8. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Finance Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
9. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.

10. Shall cooperate with Bethlehem Cemetery Board with respect to the investment of funds overseen by the Bethlehem Cemetery Board.
11. Shall receive and review requests for unbudgeted, extraordinary expenditures not to exceed \$5,000.00. The Finance Ministry Team may approve such requests if in its judgment the request is not an appropriately budgetable expenditure, the financial condition of the Church supports the expenditure, and the request is a valuable expenditure of Church resources. The Finance Ministry Team shall promptly advise the Leadership Council of the request and the Finance Ministry Team's approval of the request.
12. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.
13. Shall work in conjunction with an external auditor for audits to be performed at least every three years to verify the proper handling of Church funds and the accuracy of the financial records of the Church.
14. Shall promptly report audit findings and recommendations to the Leadership Council and the Governing Body.

Section 4 Facilities Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Facilities Ministry Team shall be composed of three members elected by the Governing Body and such other individuals as the Facilities Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities. The Facilities Ministry Team shall elect a Chair from its elected members.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Facilities Ministry Team:

1. Shall develop and implement plans to maintain, preserve and improve Church properties, except Bethlehem Cemetery.
2. Shall coordinate the use and management of the facilities.
3. Shall evaluate and procure appropriate insurance for Church properties.
4. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles.
5. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Facilities Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
6. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
7. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 5 Education Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Education Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Education Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Education Ministry Team:

1. Shall work with designated staff to support children's Christian education programs, including confirmation programs.
2. Shall work with designated staff to support adult Christian education programs.
3. Shall be responsible for granting educational scholarships from designated funds, if any.
4. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
5. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Education Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
6. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
7. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 6 Worship Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Worship Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Worship Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Worship Ministry Team:

1. Shall work with the Pastor and other ordained staff to support the spiritual life of the congregation through worship.
2. Shall assist the Pastor and other ordained staff with respect to Holy Communion and Baptisms.
3. Shall assist the Pastor and other ordained staff with other aspects of regular and special worship services with the goal of making such worship experiences meaningful and fulfilling.

4. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
5. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Worship Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
6. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
7. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 7 Member Care Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Member Care Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Member Care Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Member Care Ministry Team:

1. Shall encourage the involvement of new and continuing members in the life of the Church.
2. Shall regularly review member attendance and take action to connect with members becoming less active.
3. Shall engage in and coordinate activities to support members in need due to health and other reasons.
4. Shall ensure records of members, transfers, terminations of membership, marriages, deaths and baptisms are maintained.
5. Shall biannually, during odd-numbered years, conduct a review of the membership rolls of the Church to determine whether members are meeting their membership responsibilities; if it appears they are not, encourage their renewed commitment; in the absence of a demonstrated commitment advise the Leadership Council for its consideration and action according to these Bylaws.
6. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
7. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Member Care Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
8. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
9. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 8 Welcome Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Welcome Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Welcome Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Welcome Ministry Team:

1. Shall encourage a welcoming environment to prospective members in the community and within the Church building.
2. Shall foster a positive impression for visitors.
3. Shall develop and implement plans for membership growth and assimilation.
4. Shall coordinate activities of the ushers.
5. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles.
6. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Welcome Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
7. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
8. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 9 Outreach Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Outreach Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Outreach Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Outreach Ministry Team:

1. Shall identify opportunities for and inspire involvement in demonstrating Christian love by supporting our neighbors.
2. Shall coordinate with and support other Church groups with respect to their outreach activities.
3. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.

4. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Outreach Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
5. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 10 Fellowship Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Fellowship Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Fellowship Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Fellowship Ministry Team:

1. Shall develop and implement programs and activities to provide fellowship opportunities for the Congregation, including opportunities for youth, adults and families.
2. Shall foster additional fellowship activities by serving as a resource for other individuals and groups interested in planning activities and programs.
3. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
4. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Fellowship Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
5. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 11 Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team

A. Composition

The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall be the Chair, and such other individuals as the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team may include to assist in carrying out its roles and responsibilities.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team:

1. Shall work with designated staff to develop and implement regular programming and activities to empower and encourage fellowship, faith development and leadership opportunities among youth in middle school, high school, and other young adults.
2. Shall coordinate with other ministry teams to involve and integrate younger people into the wider life and ministries of the Church.
3. Shall coordinate with the Finance Ministry Team to request and provide for appropriate funds to carry out its roles and responsibilities.
4. Shall establish, review and revise policies and procedures related to its function. Upon adoption, the Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team shall provide any such policies and procedures to the Secretary.
5. Shall coordinate with the Leadership Council with respect to any proposed policies or actions that would affect the strategic planning of the Church or the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall regularly report on its activities to the Leadership Council and shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 12 Bethlehem Cemetery Board

A. Composition

The Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be composed of six members elected by the Governing Body. The Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall elect a President, Vice President, Secretary, and Treasurer from its members.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Bethlehem Cemetery Board:

1. Shall be responsible for the administration and maintenance of Bethlehem Cemetery and the funding of those activities.
2. Shall designate a member to serve as a liaison to the Finance Ministry Team with respect to the investment of funds overseen by the Bethlehem Cemetery Board.
3. Shall be responsible for developing, reviewing, revising and maintaining its own policies and procedures related to the administration and maintenance of Bethlehem Cemetery.
4. Shall annually provide a summary written report of its activities to the congregation.

Section 13 Nominations Committee

A. Composition

The Nominations Committee is a standing committee and shall be composed of one member elected by the Governing Body, who shall serve as the Chair, and at least two other members, who shall be members of the Church and shall be identified by the Chair in consultation with the Leadership Council. Members of the Nominations Committee shall not hold any other elected position within the Church while serving on the Nominations Committee.

B. Roles and Responsibilities

The Nominations Committee:

1. Shall be responsible to the congregation to identify and present at least two weeks in advance of the Annual Meeting one or more eligible candidates to fill all open elected positions identified in the Bylaws.
2. Shall advise the Pastor and Leadership Council of the candidates for the open elected offices prior to the Leadership Council's call of the Annual Meeting.
3. Shall, upon request, assist the various Ministry Teams and the Auditing Committee in identifying individuals with the aptitude for and interest in serving as unelected members.

Article VII Terms of Elected Office and Term Limits

All terms of office begin upon adjournment of the Annual Meeting at which the individual is elected and run until the adjournment of the Annual Meeting at which the individual's successor is due to be elected.

Section 1 Leadership Council

A. President

The President's term shall be one year. The President shall be eligible to serve no more than three consecutive elected one-year terms.

If there is a vacancy in the office of President, the Vice President shall fill the responsibilities of President until the next Annual Meeting.

B. Other Leadership Council Positions

The terms of Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary and the three at-large positions on the Leadership Council shall be three years. The terms of the Vice President, Treasurer, and Secretary shall be staggered such that one of each expires each year. The terms of the three at-large positions on the Leadership Council shall be staggered such that one of each expires each year. Individuals elected to these Leadership Council positions shall be eligible to be elected to

no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Leadership Council for more than seven consecutive years, exclusive of any time spent serving as President.

Section 2 Finance Ministry Team and Facilities Ministry Team

The terms of office of the individuals elected to the Finance Ministry Team and the Facilities Ministry Team shall be three years. The terms of the three elected positions on each of these bodies shall be staggered such that one of each expires each year.

Individuals elected to the Finance Ministry Team shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Finance Ministry Team for more than seven consecutive years.

Individuals elected to the Facilities Ministry Team shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Facilities Ministry Team for more than seven consecutive years.

Section 3 Bethlehem Cemetery Board

The terms of office of the individuals elected to the Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be three years. The terms of the six members of the Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be staggered such that two of each expire each year. Individuals elected to the Bethlehem Cemetery Board shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms. No individual shall serve on the Bethlehem Cemetery Board for more than seven consecutive years.

Section 4 Other Elected Offices

The terms of all other elected offices shall be three years. Individuals elected to other elected offices shall be eligible to be elected to no more than two consecutive three-year terms.

No individual shall serve in any elected office of the Church for more than seven consecutive years, exclusive of any time spent serving as President.

Article VIII Meetings of the Governing Body

There shall be an Annual Meeting of the Governing Body, which shall be held as early in January of each year as is practicable. The Leadership Council shall select the date, time and place for this meeting. At the Annual Meeting, the Governing Body shall (1) elect, by majority vote of those members present and voting, eligible members to fill all open elected positions of the Church; (2) receive and act on an annual budget recommended by the Finance Ministry Team and Leadership Council; and (3) conduct any other business that may come before it.

Special meetings of the Governing Body may be called by the Leadership Council at its discretion.

The Leadership Council shall, upon written request of at least 25 members, call a special meeting of the Governing Body to be held no more than 30 days after the written request is

received. The written request shall specify the purpose of the requested meeting of the Governing Body.

At special meetings of the Governing Body, only such business as has been specified in the notice of the special meeting may be voted upon.

At least 14 days' advance notice shall be given of the time, place and purpose of all meetings of the Governing Body. Such notice shall include, at a minimum, (1) verbal and/or written notice at, or immediately before or after, worship service(s) and (2) notification through other reliable means, utilizing such technology as may exist at the time, designed to reach members of the congregation.

Unless otherwise specified in these Bylaws, all decisions of the Governing Body shall be made by majority vote of those members present and voting.

Article IX Administration

Section 1 Pastor

A. Qualifications and Selection

The Pastor shall be an ordained minister who has been recommended or approved by the Covenant Association or the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ. If there is a vacancy in the position of Pastor, the Leadership Council shall, in consultation with the search committee, nominate a candidate to be voted on by the Governing Body. Only one candidate shall be considered at a time.

B. Responsibilities

The Pastor shall be the spiritual leader of the Church and oversee its day-to-day administrative activities. The Pastor:

1. Shall care for the general welfare of the congregation.
2. Shall preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments and rites of the Church, and oversee all worship services.
3. Shall minister to the sick and those otherwise in need.
4. Shall administer the activities of the Church in cooperation with the Leadership Council, the Ministry Teams, and the ordained and other staff.
5. Shall support the Leadership Council in its role of strategic planning for the future of the Church and setting the overall policy and direction of the Church.
6. Shall serve as a member ex officio of the Leadership Council and attend Leadership Council meetings except to the extent the Leadership Council is discussing the performance and evaluation of the Pastor. The Pastor shall have a voice on matters coming before the Leadership Council, but shall not be entitled to vote. If the Pastor is unable to attend a Leadership Council meeting, he or she

is entitled to delegate such responsibility to an Associate Pastor or other ordained staff.

7. Shall recommend to the Leadership Council the call or termination of ordained staff within the parameters established in the budget and the strategic direction established by the Leadership Council. The Pastor shall be responsible for directing, developing, and evaluating ordained staff.
8. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, shall, within the parameters of the budget, be responsible for hiring, directing, developing, evaluating and, as the Pastor determines appropriate, terminating the employment of non-ordained staff.
9. Shall receive advice and counsel from the Vice President with respect to personnel matters.
10. Shall, in consultation with the Vice President, annually recommend to the Finance Ministry Team and the Leadership Council a budget for the compensation and benefits of all staff.
11. May, in consultation with the Leadership Council, establish committees or task forces to assist in fulfilling the Pastor's role or otherwise support the Church.
12. Shall have the right to grant or deny requests for other clergy to perform any religious ceremony in the Church, none of which shall be performed without the Pastor's consent. The Pastor shall have the right to delegate the responsibility of leading a worship service to an ordained guest minister during the temporary absence of the Pastor or for a particular special occasion.
13. Shall annually provide a summary written report of his or her activities to the congregation.

If there is a vacancy in the position of Pastor, any interim Pastor selected under these Bylaws shall carry out these responsibilities.

Section 2 Associate Pastor(s) and Other Ordained Staff

The Church may employ one or more Associate Pastors and/or other ordained staff within the budgetary limits established by the Governing Body. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the responsibility of the Leadership Council, acting on a recommendation of the Pastor, if any, to hire Associate Pastor(s) and/or other ordained staff. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the right of the Leadership Council, acting on the recommendation of the Pastor, if any, to terminate any relationship with any Associate Pastor or other ordained staff. Any individual employed as an Associate Pastor shall be recommended or approved by the Covenant Association or the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Associate Pastor(s) and other ordained staff shall have such duties and responsibilities as set forth in their terms of employment or as otherwise directed by the Pastor. Such individuals shall perform their responsibilities under the direction of and with the counsel of the Pastor.

Associate Pastor(s) and/or other ordained staff may, from time to time, be delegated or otherwise requested to attend meetings of the Leadership Council, which responsibility they shall fulfill.

Section 3 Non-Ordained Staff

Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the responsibility of the Pastor to employ support staff personnel to perform administrative and operational duties as needed and within budgetary limits. Such individuals shall perform their responsibilities under the direction of and with the counsel of the Pastor. Unless otherwise specified by the Governing Body, it shall be the right of the Pastor to terminate any relationship with any non-ordained staff.

Article X Property

The Church may in its corporate name acquire real and personal property by purchase, gift, devise, bequest or other lawful means. The Church may utilize its real and personal property for any lawful purpose, and may transfer, rent, lease, mortgage or otherwise encumber, sell, assign, or convey such property. The Church may receive and hold in trust both real and personal property. The real property, personal property, and all monies of the Church shall be under the care of the Board of Directors, which is the Leadership Council.

Church properties shall be held as a sacred trust by the Leadership Council, which shall have the ultimate responsibility for keeping the church edifice and other buildings belonging to the Church in proper repair.

The burial grounds known as Bethlehem Cemetery shall be managed by the Bethlehem Cemetery Board.

Article XI Conflicts of Interest

Whenever a member of the Leadership Council or other individual serving in an elected position has a financial or family interest in any matter coming before them, the affected person shall (1) fully disclose the nature of the interest and (2) withdraw from discussion, lobbying, and voting on the matter. Any vote involving a potential conflict of interest shall be approved only when a majority of disinterested individuals present and voting determine that it is in the best interest of the Church to do so. The minutes of meetings at which such votes are taken shall record the disclosure, abstention and rationale for approval.

Article XII Rules of Order

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* shall govern in all cases to which they are applicable and in which they are not inconsistent with these Bylaws.

Article XIII Amendment

Proposed changes to these Bylaws shall first be referred to the Leadership Council, which shall report its recommendation to the Governing Body at the next duly called congregational

meeting. Any change to these Bylaws requires a two-thirds majority affirmative vote of all members present and voting.

Article XIV Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the Church, after providing for the debts and obligations of the Church, the remaining assets shall be transferred to the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Adopted by vote of the Governing Body on October 19, 2014.

Effective Date: January 25, 2015.

Amended by vote of the Governing Body on January 31, 2016.