

*Welcome to
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*June 17, 2018
Fourth Sunday After Pentecost*



First time guests, welcome!

We are so glad that you are worshiping with us this morning. Please sign our guest book in the Narthex and identify yourself to one of our ushers or Welcome Team members to receive a delicious gift.

We invite everyone to write their prayer requests on the Action Pads in the pews. They will be gathered and read aloud during our Prayers of the Church. Prayer requests may be edited for privacy concerns.

All are invited to stand for sections marked with a cross (✝); however, some may choose to remain seated.

*Congregational responses are in **bold**.*

RADIO SPONSORSHIP

Today's Radio Broadcast is in remembrance of **Gene Slotten's** 93rd birthday and our 68th wedding anniversary by Marie Slotten.

CHURCH LIFE

No member of Bethlehem is known to be in the hospital.

ATTENDANCE LAST SUNDAY

8:30 = 17 10:00 = 75

Our Mission

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

Order of Worship
June 17, 2018
Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

Chapel	8:30 a.m.
Sanctuary	10:00 a.m.

RINGING OF THE BELLS

PRELUDE Choral with 4 Variations “Rejoice Greatly, O My Soul” Johann Pachelbel

WELCOME AND SHARING PARISH LIFE

✝ RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP (*Psalm 92:1-4*)

One: Come and give thanks to our God. Sing praises to the holy name.

**All: With the melody of the lute and the harp and the song in our hearts,
we declare God’s steadfast love in the morning and faithfulness at night.**

One: God’s works make us glad.

All: Your works are great, O God. We sing our praises of joy to you.

✝ HYMN OF GATHERING #25 Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION

**O God, maker of all that is beautiful, Jesus gave us the seeds
of your justice and peace. In this time together, touch us, teach us,
and inspire us to sow those seeds through our ministries so that
all may share in Creation’s abundance to make true the promise that
no one will know scarcity and no one will suffer deprivation in this
community and beyond. Amen.**

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Let us take a moment of silence and reflect on our own lives,
on our limitations, on our sins.

All: **Gracious God, you are indeed generous.
You give us the gifts of the spirit which enable us to have so much.
We forget, however, that we have been recipients
of other people's generosity. Believing that what we have is ours,
we forget that all we have is yours. Forgive us.
Help us to remember that being made in your image,
we should be as generous as you. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: The sacrifice acceptable to God is a humble spirit and a contrite heart.
By God's steadfast love for us, we are forgiven of our sins.

All: **Thanks be to God.**

THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR *(please say in the way most familiar to you)*

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts [sins/trespasses],
as we forgive our debtors [those who sin/trespass against us].
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;
for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

✠ PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: Children of God, the Peace of Christ be with you.

All: **And also with you.**

One: Let us share Christ's peace with one another.

10:00 Nursery, preschool, and K-7 children will come up front for LEARNING WITH OUR CHILDREN or leave for their classes at this time.

✠ SONG OF PRAISE #35

Gloria Patri

**Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

10:00 ANTHEM

In the Garden

C. Austin Miles

Sarah Herwick, soprano; Gail Jennings, piano

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Ezekiel 17:22-24

²² “This is what the Sovereign Lord says: I will take a branch from the top of a tall cedar, and I will plant it on the top of Israel’s highest mountain. ²³ It will become a majestic cedar, sending forth its branches and producing seed. Birds of every sort will nest in it, finding shelter in the shade of its branches. ²⁴ And all the trees will know that it is I, the Lord, who cuts the tall tree down and makes the short tree grow tall. It is I who makes the green tree wither and gives the dead tree new life. I, the Lord, have spoken, and I will do what I said!”

2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 14-17

⁶ So we are always confident, even though we know that as long as we live in these bodies we are not at home with the Lord. ⁷ For we live by believing and not by seeing. ⁸ Yes, we are fully confident, and we would rather be away from these earthly bodies, for then we will be at home with the Lord. ⁹ So whether we are here in this body or away from this body, our goal is to please him. ¹⁰ For we must all stand before Christ to be judged. We will each receive whatever we deserve for the good or evil we have done in this earthly body.

¹⁴ Either way, Christ’s love controls us. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. ¹⁵ He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them. ¹⁶ So we have stopped evaluating others from a human point of view. At one time we thought of Christ merely from a human point of view. How differently we know him now! ¹⁷ This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Mark 4:26-34

²⁶ Jesus also said, “The Kingdom of God is like a farmer who scatters seed on the ground. ²⁷ Night and day, while he’s asleep or awake, the seed sprouts and grows, but he does not understand how it happens. ²⁸ The earth produces the crops on its own. First a leaf blade pushes through, then the heads of wheat are formed, and finally the grain ripens. ²⁹ And as soon as the grain is ready, the farmer comes and harvests it with a sickle, for the harvest time has come.” ³⁰ Jesus said, “How can I describe the Kingdom of God? What story should I use to illustrate it? ³¹ It is like a mustard seed planted in the ground. It is the smallest of all seeds, ³² but it becomes the largest of all garden plants; it grows long branches, and birds can make nests in its shade.” ³³ Jesus used many similar stories and illustrations to teach the people as much as they could understand. ³⁴ In fact, in his public ministry he never taught without using parables; but afterward, when he was alone with his disciples, he explained everything to them.

One: The Word of God, for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God!

8:30 COLLECTION OF OFFERING AND PRAYER REQUESTS

- ✝ 10:00 HYMN #560 Leaning on the Everlasting Arms
The Member Care Team will collect written prayer requests during this hymn.

PASTORAL PRAYER & PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH

10:00 INVITATION TO GIVE

Jesus' teachings give us many seeds to sow in this community and beyond. It is, however, through our offering that we can nurture these seeds so all may know the gospel's promise.

- 10:00 OFFERTORY How Great Thou Art Swedish traditional
Sarah Herwick, soprano; Gail Jennings, piano

- ✝ 10:00 DOXOLOGY #46
**Praise God the source of life and breath;
Praise Christ, now born to conquer death;
Praise Holy Spirit's mystery:
One God, pure grace, who sets us free. Amen.**

- ✝ 10:00 UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION
**You have been exceedingly generous to us, O God.
We return a portion of what we have to you in grateful thanksgiving.
Bless our offerings that they may nurture the seeds of hope and healing
in this community and beyond. Amen.**

- ✝ HYMN OF PARTING #453 Called as Partners in Christ's Service

- ✝ BENEDICTION
May God's love be with you as you sow seeds of justice and peace along the paths you will travel so all may know the gospel's promise. **Amen.**

- ✝ POSTLUDE Fantasie in C Minor J.S. Bach

***Please join us for the Coffee Connection in the Schmale Lounge after the 8:30 service
and in the Willimann Fellowship Hall after the 10:00 service.***

HELPING IN THE SERVICES TODAY

Pastor: Rev. John L. Kennedy

Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development: Lily Tinker Fortel

Director of Music: Thomas Burton

Organist: Gail Jennings

10:00 Bell Ringer Matt Perros

Liturgist Dennis Huibregtse

Coffee Hour Servers

8:30 Norm Wetzel, Sally Wetzel

10:00 Gert Eisele, Hilda Ward, Harriett Holzapfel

Office Volunteer Jacquie Katz

10:00 Sound Technician Jamie Dylenski

10:00 Educational Building Greeters Pat O'Reilly, Laura Seyfried

Building Opener/Closer Norm Wetzel/Scott Lovelace

8:30 Ushers Norm Wetzel, Sally Wetzel

10:00 Ushers Larry Katz, Hans Maier, Tom Naylor,
Marty Seyfried, Jay Katz, Mark Katz, Scott Buday

Sowing Seeds of Ministry: Service Prayers for the Second Sunday after Pentecost was written by the Rev. Quentin Chin, member of Church on the Hill in Lenox, MA. Copyright 2018 Faith Formation Ministry Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115. Permission granted to reproduce or adapt this material for use in services of worship or church education. All publishing rights reserved.

