

The Visitor

October 2018

Bethlehem United Church of Christ



Sunflower by our Fifth avenue entrance. Planted by God, with a little help from a bird.

"Praise God!" by Rev. John Kennedy

"The future glory of this Temple will be greater than its past glory, says the Lord of Heaven's Armies. And in this place I will bring peace." Haggai 2:9

Praise God! Congratulations to the people of Bethlehem UCC! Last Sunday, September 23, 2018, during a congregational meeting, Bethlehem UCC unanimously passed a motion to renovate the Willmann Fellowship Hall. The approved project will add a new bank of handicap-accessible restrooms for men and women; add air conditioning to our beautiful sanctuary and fellowship space; and remodel the fellowship hall with new flooring, lighting, ceiling tile, drywall, etc.

The decision was made by you, our members who are the Governing Body of Bethlehem UCC. Thank you for continuing to choose faith and hope as God leads us into this new chapter in the story. This effort is an investment in Bethlehem's and our community's future!

Thank you to the many people who spent countless hours researching, studying, consulting, working, and praying as this vision became a reality. Thank you to John Samford (president) and our Leadership Council for casting a vision. Thanks to Ron Dechert (vice-president) for his work as a project

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NOVEMBER DEADLINE

Articles and photos
need to be submitted
by Wednesday,
October 24,
in order to be
published in the
November Visitor.



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BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104

Phone 734-665-6149 Fax 734-665-3399



www.bethlehem-ucc.org

www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2

"Praise God!" Rev. John Kennedy*(Continued from page 1)*

consultant/representative for Bethlehem with the Phoenix Company. Thanks to Jeff Wortman (Finance chair) and the Finance team for consulting with Bank of Ann Arbor and for developing a funding recommendation and presentation. Thank you to Steve Darr (Facilities chair) and the Facilities team for their hours of research and involvement in facilitating this project but also numerous recent improvements to our Bethlehem building. Thank you to our administrative staff—Carol Leyshock (now retired), Mary Cantor, and Donna Whitney—for their continued efforts. Thanks to all those who attended planning sessions and contributed their questions, thoughts, and recommendations. Thanks again to all the members who attended the August congregational meeting; your thoughtful questions helped improve and refine this project to one of which we will be proud.

I'M WORKING ON A BUILDING

If I was a preacher, I tell you what I would do
I would keep on preaching, and work on a building too

[Chorus]

I'm a working on building, I'm a working on building,
I'm a working on building, For my Lord, for my Lord
It's a Holy Ghost building, It's a Holy Ghost building
It's a Holy Ghost building, For my Lord, for my Lord

Bethlehem UCC is committed to being a Christian community in the heart of Ann Arbor, and to continue to find new ways to open our hearts, minds, gifts, and facilities to our members and community.

Good job, Bethlehem!

May God continue to bless you!

God loves us all with no take-backs!

Pastor John

From Your President's Desk...

As I write this, it's the first full day of fall and the Governing Body (members of Bethlehem) today voted to accept the Leadership Council's recommendation to move ahead with air conditioning the sanctuary and remodeling the Willimann Fellowship Hall, which will share in that air conditioning; have new restrooms located on the south ("Serrv") side and new flooring and lighting. It will be a welcoming gathering space.

These projects will be handled by Phoenix Construction at an estimated total cost of \$530,000, less than originally estimated. Funding will come from three sources: \$210,000 from existing Memorials and Gifts given for this purpose, \$200,000 from our Investment Fund, and the remaining \$120,000 will be covered by a three-year loan. We will begin a capital campaign to help pay down the principal (and reduce the interest!). Money will only be borrowed after the other two funding sources are drawn down.

Demolition begins later in October (*after* Oktoberfest) when the city grants the permits requested some weeks ago. The work schedule sets final inspections the first two weeks of February.

Extra copies of the Power Point presentations passed out at the meeting with more detail are available in the church office.

Church leadership has a Fall Retreat Saturday morning, September 29, with the theme **Joy!** We'll have a chance to gather informally to share successes, difficulties, and goals, to worship (and sing!), and hear more from Ronald Richardson's book *Creating a Healthier Church*.

Another topic to be covered at the retreat is sharing plans first proposed by the Finance Ministry Team to change our fiscal year to run from June 1 thru May 31 and extended to move more annual events to better fit the program year.

Working out all the details (e.g., a five-month "year" running from January through May 2019) is in process, but it's clear a change will need to be made to our Bylaws, Article VIII, which now sets the annual meeting "as early in January of each year as is practicable." So watch for another congregational meeting, probably November 11.

Upcoming Events

- Pp. 4-5 for more Spiritual Development, Youth, and Education events
- Pp. 6-7 for Outreach events

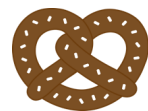
BEDDING AND TOWELS - DONATIONS NEEDED BY OCTOBER 7 DROP OFF ITEMS IN THE CHURCH LIBRARY OR OFFICE.

The Outreach Ministry Team is asking Bethlehem to support Alpha House by donating items for families staying at the shelter as well as those moving into their new homes.

Full-size comforters, blankets, and mattress pads; pillows; towels; and air mattresses.



HOLY ROLLERS PRETZELS NOVEMBER INFO



Watch your bulletin and emails for information about the November pretzel sale.

With construction starting in the Fellowship Hall, there is a question as to whether or not the kitchen will be available for pretzel making.

save the date!

The Luther College Nordic Choir from Minnesota (one of the top collegiate choirs in the world) will be performing in our Bethlehem Sanctuary on February 2, 7:30 pm.

It is sure to be a beautiful concert, so mark it on your calendars now! We will need volunteers to help with housing the choir and to cook a pre-concert meal for them on the 2nd. Stay tuned!



Bethlehem's Star Bazaar



Due to the recent congregational vote to approve the air conditioning of the sanctuary and remodeling of the dining room, the Star Bazaar and Luncheon are canceled this year due to the construction timeline.

We look forward to returning next fall with our event in a newly renovated space with lots of new possibilities! We thank the congregation for your support in the past of our bazaar and fall luncheon. It is our major fundraiser for the year, and proceeds from it are split between needs at the church and local nonprofits we support. We will return in the fall of 2019!

Women of Bethlehem Board



Bethlehem Prayer Circle

**October 4 and 18
11:30 a.m., lounge**

*Join us as we pray for our church,
our community, our world.*



CALLING ALL SINGERS!

We are restarting our Bethlehem Children's Choir under the leadership of our Music Director, Thomas Burton. Watch for more details after our 9/30 meeting.

Thank you, Thomas!

AUXILIARY/MOTHERS STUDY

Wednesday, October 17, at 1 p.m.

Thanks to the generosity of Bethlehem members and friends, we will be packing up and mailing off 103 Hygiene Kits and 63 School Kits for CHURCH WORLD SERVICE. Thank you, everyone!!!

BETHLEHEM VETERANS' MONTHLY BREAKFAST

October 5 & November 2
8:30 a.m., Classic Cup Café
Jackson Road



FOOTBALL PARKING FUNDRAISER IN OUR CHURCH LOT

Sign up by the office or online

SignUpGenius.com/go/20f0849a9a72ba4f49-football1

Check out these dates and join the fun!

Oct. 6, 13 and Nov. 3, 17



Spiritual Growth and Development - September Highlights *Lily Tinker Fortel*

CWS Kits - School and Hygiene

Thanks to the Auxiliary/Mother's Study Circle and to all of Bethlehem for meeting our Church World Service School and Hygiene Kit goals! Together, we collected enough supplies to make 103+ (and counting!) CWS hygiene kits and 60 CWS school kits!



Education Ministry Team Backpacks, School Supplies

Way to go, Bethlehem! Thanks to you and the leadership of the Education Ministry Team, we donated 64 backpacks and many school supplies to area service organizations! They were blessed during the Blessing of the Backpacks on September 9!



Commissioning Our Sunday School Teachers & Blessing of the Backpacks

On September 9, we also commissioned our wonderful Sunday school teachers and blessed the backpacks of Bethlehem's children and youth.



Prayer Circle

At a recent prayer circle, people stated an intention for themselves, which was also meant to be a blessing for others.



Perhaps these beautiful blessings will be meaningful for you as you begin another month:

- ♦ to see the sunshine, even with the clouds
- ♦ to be steady and focused, even with the chaos of life
- ♦ to count our blessings
- ♦ to see the good in people, not dwell on the negatives
- ♦ to organize
- ♦ to greet people with a smile, and guard our tone of voice
- ♦ to take out the garbage

We meet the first and third Thursdays of each month from 11:30-12:00. You are welcome Thursday 10/4 and 10/18, and always.



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Youth Group

Youth Group started back up after a summer break! Service projects, MyIntent bracelet making, game night, CROP Walk planning, football parking, have been highlights of youth group in September.



Youth group members preparing and assembling snack bags for distribution from the Bethlehem office. About twice a year, the youth group leads this service project.



Youth group members showing off their new MyIntent bracelets.



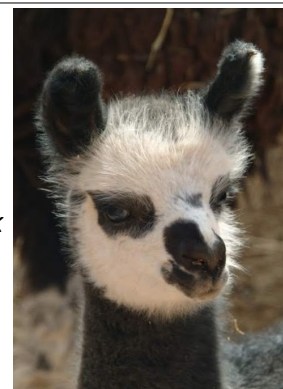
MyIntent bracelets give people an opportunity to set intentions and share them with one another, answering the question: "What's Your Word?"

WHAT'S YOUR WORD?

MyIntent

Bethlehem UCC CROP Walk Team: Pillamas

We've got a great team for the September 30 CROP Walk! Check out the November Visitor for photos!



Bethlehem Garden

The garden in the 5th Ave. yard is still producing lots of yummy food. Feel free to stop by and harvest beets, peppers, chard, kale, and yummy ripe tomatoes. Also! Our mustard plants are going to seed - take a look at how big the mustard plants grew, take a look at the seed pods, see if you can taste the spice of the seeds!



Many great thoughts were pinned onto our "Sunshine Board"

Thanks for sharing your wisdom



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BETHLEHEM UCC

OCTOBER 2018

Outreach Ministry

Service is a community-wide reality at Bethlehem UCC!



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

Team supports the congregation in fulfilling this Christian responsibility.

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

Opportunities abound!

Outreach Ministry Team (OMT) relies on the support of BUCC members and friends. Volunteers are encouraged to sign up for outreach activities to help make our community a better place for all. Current opportunities include kitchen work at Alpha House and the Delonis Center, football Saturday parking at BUCC, local advocacy work including CROP Walk participation, donating produce to Food Gatherers, purchasing Ground-cover News, donating bedding to Alpha House families and much more.

If you aren't able to give your time, OMT also welcomes your Outreach-designated contributions. In addition to your ongoing support of BUCC, an extra contribution in honor of a friend, family member, or an acquaintance recognizing their good work in the community will add to the funds OMT is able to commit to local partner organizations to enhance the programs and services they offer to those needing some extra help managing their day-to-day lives.

1

ALPHA HOUSE/IHN

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

2

FOOD GATHERERS

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

3

PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Serve after school snacks; distribute fresh produce

Alpha House/IHN
Upcoming
Opportunities
October 7

Donate bedding!

Food Gatherers Community Kitchen
Upcoming
Opportunities
October 7
November 4
December 2

Peace Neighborhood Center
Upcoming
Opportunities
September 25
October 23
November 27

I was hungry and you gave me food.

I was thirsty and you gave me a drink.

I was a stranger and you welcomed me.

- Matthew 25:35

2018-19 OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

at

PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



Peace
Neighborhood
Center



Friday Food Distribution
starts September 14!

2018

9/25
10/23
11/27



2019

1/22
2/26
4/23
5/28



PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Volunteers are needed on the 4th Tuesday of September through May to serve elementary school children nutritional snacks before going into a tutoring program. Commitment is 2:45-4:45 p.m. Signup is outside the BUCC office.

Peace Neighborhood Center
1111 N. Maple Road, Ann Arbor 48103

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

PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD FRIDAY FRESH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

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

Commitment: Any time between 9 a.m. and noon. No signup necessary. Just come when you can!

Location: Peace Neighborhood Center



*Did you
know
that
Bethlehem
is a
5 for 5 church?*

Being **5 for 5** is one sign of
congregational vitality
in UCC churches that fully support
Our Church's Wider Mission.

5 for 5 churches
give to these
five UCC Offerings:

1. **Basic Support** (year-round)
2. **One Great Hour of Sharing**
takes place in March.
3. **Strengthen the Church**
takes place in June.
4. **Neighbors in Need**
takes place in October.
5. **The Christmas Fund**
takes place in December.

Thank you for your support!

Fellowship Golf Outing

It was a great day for our Fellowship Golf Outing, despite the cool temperature. Thirty-two golfers received a choice of prizes.

After using the tie-breaker rule, the winning team was **Tom Ziesemer, Mike Haab, John Irwin, and Lily Tinker Fortel**. Second place went to **Mary and Jim Lutz, John Schneider, and Roy Doades**.

The Prayer Shawl was presented to **Della DiPietro** by former awardee Sue Buday, and the Green Jacket was awarded to a surprised **Tom Ziesemer**.

Mike Ehnis and Lily Tinker Fortel won "Closest" to the pin, and **Harriette Ehnis and Tom Z.** won "Closest" to the line.

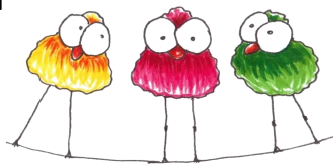


*Thanks to all of you who
donated prizes and helped make
this event a great success.
We look forward to next year.*



Spiritual Growth and Development - Looking Forward *Lily Tinker Fortel*

Youth Group in October Key Dates!



Sunday, September 30
CROP Walk

Thursday, October 4

Youth Group at Bethlehem 6:30-8:30

Thursday, October 11

Youth Group at Bethlehem 6:30-8:30

Thursday, October 18

Youth Group at Bethlehem - Theme:
Service Trips with Della, 6:30-8:30

Sunday, October 21

Walk and Talk for Youth grades 7-12

Thursday, October 25

No Youth Group - Come to the
Halloween Lock-In on 10/26!

Friday, October 26

Halloween Lock-In

Thursday November 1

Youth Group attends Hops and Hallelujahs!

Join the Youth Group Meal Train! You can help the youth group by supplying one of our meals!! Sign up online at:

www.mealtrain.com/trains/k7d4mr

Improvements to the Youth Room

In September, we started making some modest improvements to the Youth Room. We started by painting our favorite hangout spot in one section of the room. We'll be ordering some new couches and carpets and putting in new lamps in the weeks to come. And thanks to Facilities, we'll be replacing the old covers on the lights. We'll be making more changes over the coming year. Feel free to stop by and take a peek.

Looking Forward Mark Your Calendars!

Thursday 11/1

Youth Group attends Hops and Hallelujahs

Sunday, 11/18

Bethlehem hosts Interfaith Roundtable
Thanksgiving Celebration - 7 pm

Friday, 11/30

Bethlehem's Living Nativity during
Midnight Madness

Children's Choir!

Calling all singers! Bethlehem is planning to restart our Children's Choir and our music director, Thomas Burton, would like to meet with all interested kids and their parents. **Please join Thomas in the Schmale Lounge following the 10 o'clock service on Sunday, September 30 to learn more about this opportunity.** A snack will be provided. We look forward to seeing you there.



Adult Education - UCC 101 with Lily

Wednesdays 1:30-3:00

October 24, October 31,

November 7, November 14

Join Lily Tinker Fortel, Bethlehem's Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development for **UCC 101:**

An Exploration of the United Church of Christ.

As part of her ordination process, Lily took a course titled "UCC History and Polity" through the Center for Progressive Renewal earlier this year. In October and November, she will lead Bethlehem members in **UCC 101**, a four-week course in which we will explore the history, theology, and structures of the United Church of Christ. We'll talk about how Bethlehem relates to the UCC and how the UCC is exploring the future of church in our world. And we'll have opportunities to discuss what it all means to you on your personal faith journey.

Join us for this interactive and participatory opportunity to explore and learn together. Wednesdays October 24, 31, November 7, and 14. 1:30-3:00 p.m. in the Schmale Lounge.

Advent Devotional from the Still-Speaking Writers Group



Sign up on the hallway bulletin board for a UCC Advent Devotional from the Still-Speaking Writers Group!

Lily has 20 on order, and we can order more!

FROM THE CEMETERY BOARD

The hot summer days are almost behind us, and the cooler fall days will soon be here. How did your summer to-do list look?

At the cemetery ours looked like this:



- Sealcoat the main roadways. Additional sealcoating will be finished as soon as a broken pipe is repaired under the intersection of Blocks 9, 11, 12, and 15.
- Paint the window trim and doors of the cemetery office and paint the trim on the shed.
- Install electric garage-door openers on the garage of the cemetery office.
- Repair, stain, and reinstall the wooden Bethlehem Cemetery sign.
- Reconfigure and consolidate the signs at the entrance to the cemetery. Relocate the historical designation sign from the front entrance to in front of the cemetery office.
- Hang a new sign on the front door of the cemetery office.
- Update the Rules and Regulations booklet.

Two other large projects continue: refurbishing the Memorial Garden and planting trees.

The design of the Memorial Garden will remain the same, but the bushes will be trimmed, excess mulch will be removed, and additional flowers will be planted in the spring. Two trees will be planted in Block 16 to finish the landscaping in that section. A Ginkgo tree has been donated and will be planted in Block 19 along with another tree. If you are interested in donating funds toward the purchase of additional trees for the cemetery, please let a member of the Cemetery Board know. Any amount is welcome.

Last, a reminder that any spring or summer grave decorations should be removed by November 1. If they are left, they will be disposed of. Thank you.

Totenfest Memorial Service

Sunday, November 4, at both worship services

At this service, everyone will be invited to come forward and light a candle in memory of loved ones who have passed away.

In addition, we will have a special insert remembering all who have passed away since our last Totenfest Service in November 2017.



Please contact the office to let us know of any immediate family members you would like listed in our Totenfest memorial bulletin.

MEMORIALS & GIFTS

CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND

Friedrich (Fritz) Bausch Memorial
David Fisher Memorial
Lois Haeussler Memorial
Gary Hentz Memorial

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Friedrich (Fritz) Bausch Memorial
Nancy Crosby Memorial
Norm & Helen Grob Memorial

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Jim & Sallie Stadel Honorarium

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

John Nimz Memorial

Gifts listed were received through
September 30, 2018

RADIO BROADCAST SPONSORSHIPS

September 16

In memory of **Gary Hentz** from his wife,
Pat Hentz.

RADIO BROADCAST SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIPS



Please remember that a lot of folks count on the weekly Radio Broadcast of our 10 o'clock worship service. This program is funded by weekly radio sponsorships, memorials, and special donations.

Have you sponsored a Radio Broadcast lately?

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

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



Bethlehem's Tree of Life

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

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

August 2018	Year to Date	YTD Target	2018 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$304,984	\$297,821	\$446,732
Expenses	\$345,627	\$358,302	\$537,454
Net	(\$40,643)	(\$60,481)	(\$90,722)



Covenant of Welcome

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

Our Core Values

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

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.

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Staff, Ministry Team Chairs, and Leadership Council

STAFF

Pastor: Rev. John Kennedy
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Orval L.E. Willimann
Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development: Lily Tinker Fortel
Parish Administrator: Mary Cantor
Financial Administrator: Betty Clark
Parish Secretary: Donna Whitney
Director of Music: Thomas Burton
Organist: Gail Jennings
Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan
Sunday School Nursery Teacher: Kelsey Postler

MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRS

Finance: Jeff Wortman
Facilities: Steve Darr
Education: Jane Nicholson Schmerberg
Worship: Caroline Ashenfelter
Member Care: Jenny Foster
Welcome: Kurt Schmerberg
Outreach: Laura Seyfried
Fellowship: Jane Ziesemer
Youth & Young Adult: Katie Rowan
Bethlehem Cemetery: Susan Irwin
Nominations Committee: Della DiPietro

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

President: John Samford
Vice President: Ron Dechert
Secretary: Sue Wortman
Treasurer: Shannon O'Reilly
At-Large Members:
 Judy Coucouvanis
 Kris Lovelace
 Julie Feldkamp
Ex Officio: Rev. John Kennedy