

The Visitor

December 2018

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

"The Hopes and Fears of All the Years" by Rev. John Kennedy

*"O Little Town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting Light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight."*

Christmas Eve is the biggest "seeker" service of the Christian year. Every year, hundreds of millions of Christians around the world gather in candlelight to rehear the Christmas Story through carols and

Scripture. We come to hear the story with our hopes and fears (of all the years) hoping to encounter that which is beyond and present.

Even as I write these words I can replay in my mind like a videotape (or DVD or MP3 player rather) the magical memories of Christmas Eves past...

*"Hail the heaven-born Prince of Peace!
Hail the Sun of Righteousness!
Light and life to all he brings,
risen with healing in his wings.*

(Continued on page 4)

**JANUARY AND FEBRUARY
WILL BE A
COMBINED VISITOR.
DEADLINE IS JANUARY 14.**



(PRINT DATE: JANUARY 24)

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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

From the President

When I chaired the Pastoral Search Committee four years ago, we compiled the congregation's responses to a questionnaire about our church and what was desired in our next called pastor. One expressed desire was to strengthen ties ecumenically and within the UCC. This past month has exemplified that effort.

Having a "member in discernment" in Lily Tinker Fortel to share some of what she'd learned about the UCC in her studies to become an ordained pastor has been a treat and "filled in gaps" in my UCC knowledge. I came into the course saying, "Everything I know about the UCC I learned at BUCC." After the course, I can share a phrase that kept coming up: "If you've seen one UCC church, you've seen one UCC church."

If you didn't get a chance to attend all the course sessions, I urge you to seek out Lily or those who attended: Even though our denomination is relatively young (since I'm older than it is...), we have quite an impressive "family tree" and list of accomplishments!

BUCC is a member of an association of about four dozen UCC congregations in lower Michigan, the Covenant Association to use an appropriately UCC word: while churches are "in covenant," we are autonomous and not part of a hierarchy. In mid-November, I traveled with Pastor John to First Congregational UCC in Jackson for the Covenant Association fall meeting. It was a good reminder we are part of something larger, an opportunity to get acquainted, attend workshops, and hear an inspiring musical keynote address. I was so caught up in the moment that when the call for a site for the Spring Covenant Association meeting was made, I volunteered BUCC! Watch for more post-Easter on how you can help us offer an extravagant welcome.

As president, I've been collecting acknowledgements of BUCC's part in all levels of the UCC:

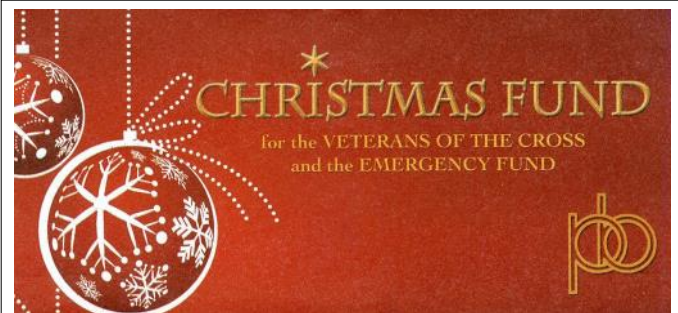
- 185th Anniversary Accolade from Covenant Association
- Our Church's Wider Mission: top 10 percent from Michigan Conference
- Our Church's Wider Mission: 5 for 5 church from national Synod

Extending even beyond our diverse denomination and Christendom, BUCC opened its doors to the Interfaith Roundtable of Washtenaw County's Thanksgiving service, including Christians, Jews, Hindus, Bahá'ís, and other faiths. Parts of the program that stood out for me (beyond all the cookies BUCC bakers provided!) were a musical number by Hindu youth, a chant in Persian by a Bahá'í, and the traditional Jewish New Year blowing of the shofar (ram's horn.) Thanks to all who helped make this celebration warm and welcoming.

As I write this, Thanksgiving leftovers still await in the refrigerator as some people literally do battle in the seasonal buying frenzy. My wish for you is to remember we already got the best Christmas gift possible, even though we might be on the "naughty list."

Merry Christmas to all!

John Samford, Leadership Council President



UCC Annual Christmas Fund Mission Offering

In December, we take part in our final 5 for 5 offering of the year. This special donation helps active and retired clergy and lay employees of the United Church of Christ.

Your gift provides for the supplementation of small annuities and health premiums, emergency grants, and Christmas gift checks.

The envelopes will be placed in your bulletin.

Thank you.



**RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE
COMING TO BETHLEHEM JANUARY 29, 9-4
WATCH YOUR GROUP EMAIL AND
REFRIGERATOR PAGE FOR MORE DETAILS**

A CHRISTMAS CANTATA
"GOD CAME NEAR"
 THE MIRACLE AND MAJESTY OF CHRISTMAS



SUNDAY, DECEMBER 9
10:00 Worship Service
Performed by Bethlehem's Chancel Choir

Annual Nativity Display, Lounge

Stop by the Schmale Lounge and see Bethlehem's annual Nativity display. We have a wide range of scenes, from beautifully ornate, to rough-cut wood or ceramic, to a silly but extremely creative one made out of kitchen utensils.



Thank you to all who loaned us their Nativity displays!

BLUE CHRISTMAS

An evening of worship for those experiencing grief and sadness this Christmas season.
 Thursday Dec. 13, 7 p.m., sanctuary

Gift giving, family traditions, nativity scenes, good food—there is much to look forward to at Christmas time. However, this time of year can also be lonely, painful, and sorrowful when you have suffered loss or are experiencing grief, sadness, or depression.

Jesus came to comfort us at times like these.
 Please join us for Blue Christmas at Bethlehem Church.

Coffee Break Concert Series, 2018-2019 ③
 Free Concert and Open to the Public

Organ Concert

"Dancing at Christmas"

Shin-Ae Chun, organ

December 6
Thursday
12:15 PM
 Bethlehem

*Sponsored by
 First Baptist Church
 of Ann Arbor*

ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS HAPPENINGS

Dec 6 Bethlehem Prayer Circle
 Dec 6 Coffee Break Concert, sanctuary
 Dec 7 Monthly veterans' breakfast
 Dec 7,14,21,28 Yoga for Advent
 Dec 9 Christmas Cantata, Chancel Choir
 Dec 11 Mary Martha Bible Study
 Dec 12 Auxiliary/Mother's Study Christmas gathering
 Dec 13 Blue Christmas Service (see below)
 Dec 16 Children's Christmas Program
 Dec 20 Bethlehem Prayer Circle
 Dec 24/25 OFFICE CLOSED
 Dec 24 Christmas Eve Services (see below)
 Dec 29 Red Cross Blood Drive 9-4
 Jan 1 OFFICE CLOSED



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP SERVICES

Thursday, December 13

Blue Christmas Service, 7 PM

For those experiencing grief and sadness

Monday, December 24
Christmas Eve

5:00 PM

A family-centered Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols featuring an interactive telling of the Christmas story

7:30 PM

A Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols and a musical celebration featuring the Bethlehem Chancel Choir, the Bethlehem Strings, and Solid Brass (7 p.m.)

11:00 PM

Candle lighting, Communion, handbell quartet, and harpist Deborah Gabrion.

(Continued from page 1)

Mild he lays his glory by,
born that we no more may die,
born to raise us from the earth,
born to give us second birth.
Hark! The herald angels sing,
'Glory to the newborn King!'

The year is 1969, and I'm seven years old. I'm sitting with my mother in the pew at the 11 p.m. service at St. Andrews United Church of Christ, and my father is preaching. The candles twinkle in the soft low light, and the scent of pine perfumes the air. I drift to sleep in the lap of my mother as she strokes my face. I awaken as the congregation stands, singing *"Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright."* The light begins to glow and then grow as each person passes the light of the Christ-Candle. The surroundings seem so full of hope as we sing, *"Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace."*

I hear soft crying and watch a mother and her high-school age daughter weeping and holding onto each other (their names have long since been forgotten by me). My mother speaks to the woman and her daughter as they hold each other, and the girl cries into her mother's coat. My mother explains to me that her older brother, Paul (a guy that I looked up to, but he was only 19), is in Vietnam. Their only wish for Christmas was for the war to end and for their son and brother to return home safely.

The years 1968-69 were confusing to a little kid. I remember watching on TV the news of the death toll from the Vietnam War and the news of Martin Luther King, Jr., and Bobby Kennedy's assassinations. Only a few months before Christmas, we were watching Neil Armstrong step onto the surface of the moon. So much fear and hope, in tension with each other. And yes, even children were aware. Are things really very different today?

I remember thinking for the first time, beyond my own desire for a properly filled Christmas list, of Paul at war, hungry, afraid, and cold (although he was in the jungle). I just wanted Jesus to show up and fix everything so that Paul's sister wouldn't

have to cry. I thought maybe Santa might drop Paul off at home after midnight, like a Christmas present, so his sister and mother would be happy.

Just like that Christmas Eve of 1969, every Christmas Eve, we all still come with "our hopes and fears of all the years" and pray with expectation, that they will be met in "Thee" tonight. I believe Jesus was with Paul that night (10,000 miles from home). I believe Jesus was with his family and that Christ Jesus was with all of humanity that night. I believe Jesus will be present with all of us this Christmas, and that he is always with us. Perhaps he will be in the face of an immigrant child, a homeless person, an addict, one who is grief stricken, depressed, discouraged, divorced, or a person sitting all alone weeping. Perhaps you will be the face of Christ to another even with your hopes and fears of all the years.

This year at Bethlehem we will experience Christ with us, no matter who we are or where we are on life's journey.

"Because of God's tender mercy, the light from heaven is about to break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, and to guide us to the path of peace." —Luke 1:78-79

Christmas blessings and best wishes for a Christmas of Hope, Peace, Joy, & Love!

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





Lois's Corner

Lois's Corner is completed. Thank you to all who helped make this possible, especially the Facilities Ministry Team, the Education Ministry Team, and the entire Leadership Council. Many thanks to Elizabeth Jarzebowski, from Elizabeth J Interiors, for providing her interior design services as a donation.

Lois's Corner was made possible with a donation from Lois Hauessler. Lois worked for years with our Sunday school children. She was dedicated, hard-working, loving, and well-loved. This family-friendly space tells the community that we value families and children and want them to be welcome in our sanctuary. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." —Matthew 19:14



Spiritual Growth and Development *from Lily*

Advent Calendars

Advent Calendars for Bethlehem families with children. Pick them up from Lily starting Sunday, Dec. 2.

Also pick up your copy of *Faithful Families: Creating Sacred Moments at Home* by Traci Smith.



Advent Devotionals

2018 Advent Devotionals from the UCC's Still-Speaking Writers Group will be available for pick-up starting Sunday, December 2. If you didn't sign up for one, no worries! We have extras.



Blue Christmas Thursday, 12/13, 7pm. Come however you are. A service for those experiencing difficult times this Advent Season. More on p. 3

Bringing our Gifts to the Christ Child Jesus came as a light into the world and he called us to share that light with others. See p. 11 for opportunities to share our treasures with those in need this Advent season. Bring your gifts to the Manger on Sundays in Advent.

Connect with Community During the Day

Prayer Shawl Ministry - Mondays 1pm-3pm, Lounge
Prayer Circle in the Lounge.

Thursdays 12/6 & 12/20 - 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.

Mary Martha Bible Study - Tuesday 12/11 - 10:00 a.m.

Auxiliary Mother's Study - Wednesday 12/12 1-3pm



Yoga for Advent

Fridays from 2:00-3:30 in the Youth Room.
Nov. 30; December 7, 14, 21, 28

As part of her Yoga Teacher Training, Lily will offer a 5-week yoga class during Advent. All are welcome to this beginner-level class! The class will also explore some key themes of Advent.

Sign up on the bulletin board. Wear comfy clothes that allow you to move! If possible, bring a yoga mat (but we'll have them if you don't!).



UTH Group - December Schedule

Thursday, December 6 - 6:30-8:30 at Bethlehem - Service Night. We'll assemble food bags to be distributed to hungry people at the Bethlehem Office.



Thursday, December 13 - No Youth Group - Join us for Blue Christmas Worship Seervice. 7pm in the Sanctuary

Thursday, December 20 - Youth Group Christmas Party at Lily's House. 6:30-8:30 p.m. *Food, fun, fellowship!*



Thursday, December 27 & Thursday, January 3 - No evening Youth Group, but look for special outing week of Dec. 31 (TBD).

Other Events *A Star is Born*

2018 Christmas Program
Sunday, December 16, 10 am worship
Rehearsal with pizza - Sat., 12/15 at 10am



In Photos Some November Highlights



Above and Right: Youth Group and Halloween Fun
Cozy conversations; Escape Room team work; Lock-in Fun; and a visit from Tara-anna BUCC's favorite T-Rex.

Below: UCC 101 - Thanks to all who joined in our four-part exploration of the United Church of Christ!



Right: A bunch of clergy walk into Bethlehem Church...

It's not a joke! Bethlehem hosted the monthly gathering of area UCC clergy for lunch and meaningful conversation in November.



Prayer Circle

Exploring our intentions and how we want to bring God's Love to the world.



Mustard Seeds: Thanks to all who contributed to, and explored, our garden. Above, a bouquet of mustard seeds harvested as we closed the garden.

Looking Forward - Mark Your Calendars *Learning from and with members of our broader community!*

Carrie Newcomer at the Ark - Sunday January 13. Many of you who have come to classes, prayer circles, and even-ing worship services with me have heard songs by Carrie Newcomer. She's one of my favorite musicians, and her music has beautiful spiritual themes. I recommend this concert. — Lily

Groundcover to Host Sister Simone Campbell at Bethlehem - Sunday, March 31. We're thrilled to be collaborating with Groundcover as they host Sister Simone Campbell from Nuns on a Bus, Results.org, and NETWORK. Mark your calendars and watch for details in the months to come!

2018-19 OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES at PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



2019 Peace Neighborhood after-school program dates

Jan. 22

Feb. 26



Apr. 23

May 28



Friday Food Distribution
starts September 14!



PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

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

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

Questions? Contact Sue Muir at suemuir@

PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD FRIDAY FRESH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Now 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 sign-up necessary. Just come when you can!

Youth-Led Mission Project *Blessing Baskets*

Our newest youth-led mission project is to collect items for Alpha House. Each family that passes through Alpha House is given a Blessing Basket of things a family would need when moving into a home. We will be collecting items through the end of the year, and our goal is to fill 6 baskets. **All items must be new.** From the the Alpha House website Wish List:

- Pillows
- Twin Sheet Sets (flannel or regular)/Youth Twin Sheet Sets
- Twin Comforters (adult and children's)
- Twin Blankets
- Twin Mattress Covers or Pads (plastic zip-around or quilted)
- Bathroom Mats/Rugs
- Towels (bath, hand, and washcloth)
- Shower Curtains & Rings (fun colors/patterns would be a treat!)
- Pots & Pans Sets
- Sets of Dishes
- Glassware Sets
- Place Settings (for 4)
- Kitchen Supplies (baking sheets, measuring cups & spoons, can openers, etc.)
- Travel coffee mugs, plastic tumblers with straws (adult & child sized)
- Tool Kits
- Mops/Brooms/Dustpans
- Cleaning Supplies (Lysol, Windex, dish soap, sponges, laundry detergent, etc.)
- First Aid Kit (family size)

Our goal this year is to learn more about the Poor People's Campaign. As we do this together, we are putting our beliefs into action and helping the neediest. Our mission projects this year are all meant to align with the other outreach mission projects for Bethlehem. Together we can do more!



November 1, 2018 Hops & Hallelujahs

Another wonderful evening of dining and singing at Conor O'Neill's. There were 52 in attendance. Thank you to Tom Ziesemer for organizing; the Wannabes—Steve Darr, Gordon Darr, Ben Powell, and Brian Paton; Mary Ann Folk for leading us in singing, as well as **Sarah Kennedy** and **Abby Bowers**; and Jim Stadel for helping with sound and equipment.



As autumn seemed to turn quickly into winter, we remember with longing some of our wonderful fall events such as Oktoberfest.

These photos didn't make it into the October Visitor, but they are an important reminder of the wonderful community we have at Bethlehem.



BETHLEHEM UCC

DECEMBER 2018

Outreach Ministry



THANK YOU!

Singing out praises to all of the volunteers who helped support Bethlehem's Outreach Ministry this year! There is still time to do more if you haven't had an opportunity yet!

1

HELP FILL BLESSING
BASKETS WITH SUPPLIES
FOR ALPHA HOUSE/IHN
FAMILIES

2

DONATE GIFT CARDS TO
PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD
CENTER OR
ALPHA HOUSE/IHN

3

BRING PRODUCE TO THE
3RD SUNDAY
COLLECTIONS FOR
FOOD GATHERERS

Did you
know?

BETHLEHEM'S OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

The Outreach Ministry Team identifies opportunities for and inspires involvement in demonstrating Christian love by supporting our neighbors near and far. It also coordinates with and support other church groups with respect to their outreach activities.

*From the Church
Governance page of the
BUCC web site.*

DESIGNATED DONATIONS

Did you know that you can designate a donation to the Outreach Ministry? Just note it in the memo line of your check or on the general envelope available in the church pews.

THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR
TIME, TALENT AND TREASURES WITH
OUR NEIGHBORS IN NEED HERE AT
HOME AND WORLDWIDE!

BETHLEHEM ADVENT OUTREACH

The season of Advent begins the first Sunday in December. During this season please come to Bethlehem bearing gifts. The Outreach Ministry Team and the Education Ministry Team have opportunities to share with our community and help those most in need. Christmas donations will be collected through Sunday, December 16, because they will be distributed that following week. These are ways you can help.

BLESSINGS BASKET DONATIONS (see page 8)

With this youth-led mission project, we are collecting items for the blessings baskets to give to Alpha House. These baskets are filled with things a family needs when moving into a new home. Our goal is to fill 6 baskets by the end of the season. The baskets will be in the manger in the sanctuary. Let's fill them!

GIFT CARDS FOR ALPHA HOUSE AND PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

Gift cards allow families to choose the things they need. They can buy gifts or food for the holidays. While you shop, pick up gift cards for places such as Kroger, Meijer, Busch's, Speedway, Shell, Target, Walmart, Game Stop, Old Navy, Famous Footwear, Quality 16 Movies, Rave Cinemas, VISA gift cards, etc. Denominations between \$5 and \$25 will allow multiple families to make purchases they need for their families. **Please drop off your gift cards by December 16.** During Lent there will be red and green envelopes designating Alpha House and Peace Neighborhood Center. The cards and envelopes can be dropped at the office in a designated box, put in the offering plate, or brought up to the manger on Sunday mornings.

THE MITTEN TREE

As always, our Mitten Tree will sit in our Fourth Avenue entrance. Please fill it with mittens, hats, and scarves for all ages. We will deliver the items to Peace Neighborhood Center and Washtenaw Refugee Welcome. WRW was a past mission project. They *loved* our hats, mittens, and scarves, and we told them we would keep giving!

TOYS FOR PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

There will be a collection box in the library for toys for youth of all ages. Area families can come to Peace Neighborhood where the gifts are distributed.

PRODUCE SUNDAY

The Third Sunday of November and December (11/18 and 12/16) we will have our fresh produce collection for Food Gatherers. Please help other families have food for the holiday season. Be generous!



Christmas is coming!
The manger is ready
to receive your gifts on
Sunday, December 2, 9, and 16.

*Come to Bethlehem
bearing gifts.*



Children's Christmas Program A Star is Born December 16 at the 10:00 Service.



Calling all actors, singers, angels, and manger animals!

Our Children's Christmas Program will be performed during the **10:00 service on December 16**. We will be performing ***A Star Is Born***, directed by Sarah Herwick. This fun play helps us look at the real meaning of Christmas. It will be followed by an all-church coffee hour where we'll celebrate with Christmas cookies, hot cocoa, and a few Advent projects. Come help us make Christmas cards to take to our members who can't get to church.

We welcome *all* children of *all* ages to participate. There are 8 to 10 short acting roles. We keep it low-key by having the scripts available in folders, so memorization is optional. We need narrators, and there are several non-speaking roles for the manger, including Mary and Joseph, angels, shepherds, kings, and manger animals. (Parents are welcome to participate, too.) There will be three practices: Sunday mornings December 2 and 9 during the 10:00 service and Saturday morning December 15 at 10:00 (we'll provide donuts to start and pizza to follow). There will be a final run-through on December 16 at 9:15 a.m. before the service. Practices are encouraged but not mandatory. We are very flexible and want to do whatever is needed to make it comfortable for the children. The children will be singing *Away in a Manger* and *We Wish You a Merry Christmas*.

If you are able to be in the play, please contact:

Jane Schmerberg (734-223-0412, jnmmd@umich.edu) or

Sarah Herwick (734-390-3815, sarahherwick@gmail.com) or

speak with **Lily Tinker Fortel**.

Let us know if you can help in other ways by baking Christmas cookies for December 16 or helping with the rehearsal on December 15. Please join the fun!

Luther College Nordic Choir Visit

Volunteers are needed for this wonderful event.

The Luther College Nordic Choir (one of the most well-known choirs in the world) will be visiting Ann Arbor to perform here at Bethlehem on February 2! They are looking for volunteers to host the choir during their time here (the evening of February 2). Host houses would need to provide beds for at least 2 choristers.

This is a wonderful opportunity for us to meet young, talented musicians and expand BUCC's community. Please consider volunteering to host singers if you possibly can. Interested folks should email Music Director Thomas at tburtoni@umich.edu.





Bethlehem UCC Armed Forces Veterans



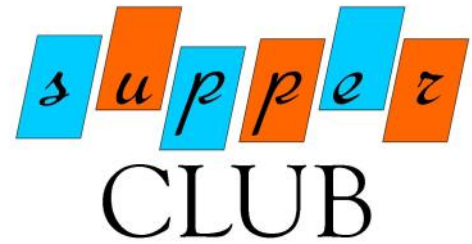
Doug Cameron	US Army	1957 - 1959
Mike Ehnis	US Army	1963 - 1971
Jack Erwin	US Army	1960 - 1962
Dave Gilmore	US Army	1970 - 1972
Roger Hoxie	US Army	1967 - 1969
		1989 - 2005 Ret.
Dennis Huibregtse	US Army	1971 - 1976
Jim Judson	US Army	1969 - 1971
Ron Karr	US Army	1968 - 1970
John Kennedy	US Army	1980 - 1982
Scott Lovelace	US Army	1970 - 1976
Gary Maki	US Army	1970 - 1973
Paul Neeb	US Army	1954 - 1956
Jerry Sutfin	US Army	1957 - 1962
Carl Waltjen	US Army	1956 - 1959
		1961 - 1964
Norm Wetzel	US Army	1968 - 1970
Jesse Wilcox	US Army	2008 - 2015
Tom Ziesemer	US Army	1966 - 1969
Jim Aldrich	US Air Force	1963 - 1969
Art French	US Air Force	1962 - 1969
Mike Haab	US Air Force	1965 - 1969
Larry Katz	US Air Force	1957 - 1960
Kristine Marshall	US Air Force	1989 - 1994
Gary Dresselhouse	US Marines	1954 - 1956
John Fischer	US Marines	1945 - 1946
Eugene Alber	US Navy	1949 - 1953
Jay Katz	US Navy	1955 - 1967
Bob Loukotka	US Navy	1961 - 1966 Ret. 1988
Jim Stadel	US Navy	1969 - 1973

Honoring Our Veterans



2019 Supper Club

- o Looking to make a connection in our congregation?
- o Would you like to make a new friend at church?
- o Do you enjoy a good meal?



If you answered "yes" to any of those questions, you will be excited to hear of our new Supper Club for 2019. We are starting a small group at Bethlehem, and we want you to join us! Participants will meet once a month in homes or in restaurants for the purpose of fellowship, hospitality, and welcome. Please contact Jennifer Vasquez with questions or to sign up: 734-658-6692 or jenniferavasquez29@gmail.com.

THANK YOU

Many thanks to all who have donated food to Food Gatherers through the food barrel in the library or by bringing produce to our Fresh Produce Sundays (Nov through May). We have been told that due to the good quality of our donated produce, it barely makes it in the Food Gatherers building before being boxed and delivered. Thank you, Bethlehem!

As of the end of November, our donations for 2018 are:

Fresh produce 339 lb

Nonperishable 1052 lb.



Our next Fresh Produce Collection will be on Sunday, December 16. Please continue to be generous!



Interfaith Thanksgiving Service



Thanks to each and every one of you for sharing your time, talents, food, music, and hospitality to welcome our interfaith community this past Sunday. The letter below is from Rev. Susan King and Rev. George Lambrides of the Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County. Their letter below describes so well the hospitality and welcome you shared. I am truly thankful for each of you. —Pastor John

On behalf of the Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County, we would like to thank you for your warm hospitality and beautiful hosting of our 24th Annual Interfaith Thanksgiving celebration. It could not have been the success it was without all of your collective hard work and generous support. To all of those who participated, the musicians, the organizers, the office staff, the greeters, the ushers, those who provided and served refreshments—our deepest gratitude.

The beauty of your sacred space and the beauty of your community was on full display for everyone who attended. Many people noted to me after the celebration that they felt very welcomed, well served, and were leaving with a sense that they had spent time in a welcoming and affirming sister faith community.

*We look forward to working with you in the days to come.
In gratitude, Rev. Susan King and Rev. George Lambrides,
Co-directors, Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County*



Interfaith Round Table of Washtenaw County
P.O. Box 3653
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-3653

MEMORIALS & GIFTS

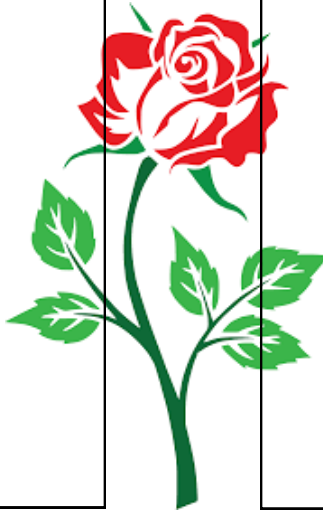
BUILDING IMPROVEMENT FUND
Betty Diuble Memorial

OUTREACH MINISTRY
All Volunteers Honorarium

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND
John E. Nimz Memorial

RADIO FUND
Marion Seyfried Memorial

Gifts listed were received
through November 30, 2018



PARISH RECORDS

DEATHS

Marion Seyfried
10/27/18
Friend of Bethlehem

Richard Kolander
11/26/18
Former member of Bethlehem

BAPTISM

Ethan Kyle Ehnis
Baptized 10/28/18
Son of Kyle and Misty Ehnis

Christmas Greetings from your Cemetery Board!

As 2018 comes to a close, please consider supporting Bethlehem Cemetery when making your end-of-year giving decisions. We're planning more exciting updates in 2019. Happy New Year!

THANK YOU

Many thanks to all the unsung heroes at Bethlehem who do so many necessary thankless tasks around the church. Thanks to Jim Stadel for the new bright and energy-efficient LED lights in the church office.

Many thanks
to the
wonderful
8:30 service folks
for giving
Betty Hills
such a nice little
birthday party.



October 2018	Year to Date	YTD Target	2018 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$375,199	\$372,277	446,732
Expenses	\$432,417	\$447,878	537,454
Net	(\$57,218)	(\$75,601)	(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