



# The Visitor

August / September 2019  
Bethlehem United Church of Christ



## One Made a Difference by Rev. John Kennedy

*The man wanted to justify his actions, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?" Jesus replied with a story: "A Jewish man was traveling from Jerusalem down to Jericho, and he was attacked by bandits. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him up, and left him half dead beside the road. By chance a priest came along. But when he saw the man lying there, he crossed to the other side of the road and passed him by. A Temple assistant walked over and looked at him lying there, but he also passed by on the other side.*

*Luke 10:30-32*

So many of us are living lives that involve serving, nurturing, and protecting others. All of us do this in different settings and different ways. As children, we would help and protect a younger child, sister, or brother from being bullied. We would help lift them up to get something out of their reach. When we think about it, the only reason any of us survived is that someone protected us from harm and lifted us up when we were small. We all pray that somewhere someone will also protect and lift our loved ones if they need it. One woman, one man can make a big difference in someone's life.

You have the power to protect and lift someone no matter your age, wealth, or status.

*(Continued on page 4)*

**Deadline for the  
October Visitor is  
Friday, September 20**



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**Office Hours**  
Monday—CLOSED  
Tuesday—Friday OPEN 9-3

## From Your President's Desk:

When I was growing up, August was considered “silly season” by the news media. Not much happened (or at least not much was reported) because many folks took a week or two off and it was too hot for anything serious. Odd stories abounded.



In this modern age, plenty happens in August and even more is reported. Generally it isn't silly, but sad.

Reviving “Silly Season,” I thought I'd share with you a photo of the rear of my car. I've had the oval “UCC”



bumper sticker for some time.

When my birthday came and I had to replace the license plate, I splurged (it **was** my birthday) and sprung for a vanity plate, something I'd never done.

The Michigan's Secretary of State web site has an online form to request a license plate word or phrase, checking if it's already taken (“BUCCERU” somehow wasn't) and then explain its meaning.

I explained the first four letters stood for “Bethlehem United Church of Christ” and the suffix indicated I was associated **with that august organization**. Furthermore, I explained I was born in Laramie Wyoming and was honoring my “cowboy roots” by punning the more common spelling “buckaroo.”

Not silly at all!



**silly season**  
**noun**

### Definition of silly season

**1:** a period (such as late summer) when the mass media often focus on trivial or frivolous matters for lack of major news stories

**2:** a period marked by frivolous, outlandish, or illogical activity or behavior

## Bethlehem welcomes David Hahn to the position of Music Director!

David began work the last week of August and is already settling in to Ann Arbor, the University of Michigan and Bethlehem Church.



David is a 1st year doctoral student in choral conducting at the U of M and moved to town from Rochester New York where he earned a Master

of Music in choral conducting while holding the positions of Artistic Conductor & Conductor of the Orchard Park New York Chorale and Director of Choral Music at the Nichols School in Buffalo.

David earned his Master of Music in Choral Conducting at Eastman School of Music at the University of Rochester and his Bachelor of Music in Voice and Sacred Music from Moody Bible Institute in Chicago Illinois.

He has extensive musical employment experience directing singers, orchestra, chorus, and choirs, He has instructed in piano and voice, founded a group of chamber singers and has extensive experience "behind the scenes," managing budgets, programming, branding, marketing, hiring and supervising, etc.

David's resume is beyond impressive and he comes well recommended by our previous Music Director, Thomas, as well as by faculty.

We are very blessed to have a world class University's music program drawing such talented folks as David to our fair city and have been doubly blessed he sees Bethlehem as a welcoming, supportive, musical place!

**Calling All Members of Bethlehem (not just youth!)****Service Day at the Food Gatherers warehouse****Saturday, Oct. 19, 2–4 PM, 1 Carrot Way**

Youth and families are invited to this fun service opportunity. There is a sign up by the office, or just let Lily know.

**2019 Bethlehem Golf Outing**

**Sunday, Sept. 8, 2 PM,**  
Brookside Golf Club



A sign up by the office. Great prizes, picnic style dinner and fellowship.



**ALL CHURCH — ALL AGES**  
**Dinner and Board Game Night,**  
**Hosted by Bethlehem Youth**

**Thursday – September 12, 6:30–8:30 in the youth room**

**HOLY ROLLERS PRETZELS**

**Saturday, September 21**

Rolling at 8 a.m., sales from 11–1

(Call 734-665-6149 to preorder.)

**ALPHA HOUSE VOLUNTEER DAY—Sunday, October 6**

At 5:30 volunteers serve a meal for 25 residents, then from 7–8 p.m. volunteers help with kids' activities while parents enjoy a bit of down time. **If you can join us, contact Laura at [LLSeyfried@hotmail.com](mailto:LLSeyfried@hotmail.com).**



**Sunday, September 1 & October 6**  
**Food Gatherers Volunteer Day@ Delonis Center**  
**12–2:30 p.m., Sign up near the office.**

**EVENTS**

**(more details throughout the Visitor)**

Sept 5 & 19 **Prayer Circle (1st & 3rd Thursdays)**  
Sept 5 **Youth Group kick-off**  
Sept 6 **Veterans' Breakfast (1st Fridays)**  
Sept 8 **Bethlehem golf outing**  
Sept 8 **Sunday school begins**  
Sept 8 **Blessing of the Backpacks**  
Sept 10, 17, Oct. 1 **Yoga with Lily**  
Sept 11, 12, 25, 26 **Adult Faith Formation**  
Sept 12 **All Church Game Night**  
Sept 18 **Auxiliary/Mother's Study**  
Sept 21 **Pretzel sales**  
Sept 24 **Peace Neighborhood volunteer day**  
Oct 4 **Oktoberfest**  
Oct 6 **Alpha House volunteer day**  
Oct. 6 **Food Gatherers day**  
Oct 6 **CROP Walk**  
Oct 19 **Service day, Food Gatherers**  
Nov 6 **Hops & Hallelujahs**  
Nov 8 **Fall Bazaar and Luncheon**

**Bethlehem  
Supper  
Club**



**Interested in meeting other Bethlehem folks in small groups at mealtime? Could be dinner, could be brunch!**

Join our **Supper Club** by filling out a form (on the bulletin board in the office hallway) and dropping it at the office, or contact Jennifer Vasquez (contact info below).

Returning members, please let Jennifer know if you want to continue or not, and whether you want to stay in your same group or meet new people.

We are actively seeking parents with younger kids who might want to meet as family gatherings. 734-658-6692 (cell/text) or [jenniferavasquez29@gmail.com](mailto:jenniferavasquez29@gmail.com)



**If you're looking for a festive evening  
in early October,  
please mark your calendars for  
Friday, October 4, 6-9 pm**

**OKTOBERFEST AT BETHLEHEM!**

**See page 11 for details**

**Bethlehem's Star Bazaar**

**SAVE THE  
DATE  
NOVEMBER 8**

Due to construction and renovations in the Fellowship Hall last year, we were unable to hold our annual Fall Luncheon & Bazaar.

We look forward to returning this fall with our event in the newly renovated space on Friday, November 8th! Stay tuned for more details, including donations of food and items for this event!

*Women of Bethlehem Board*



*(Continued from page 1)*

It's no secret that our nation is becoming increasingly hostile and divided, and a house or nation divided against itself cannot stand. In our current culture, there are some who believe that "our neighbors" are only those who look like "us," sound like us, and act like us. And there are some who believe that if we are not like them then we are not their neighbor. Let each of us imagine standing in the very presence of Jesus, then Jesus asking us a question while looking us in the eye with love. Jesus asks, "John, Tom, Bob, Mike, Kathy, Karen, Susan, Jane, who is your neighbor?" Jesus is looking us each in the eyes, and we are looking in Jesus' eyes (of goodness, pure truth, and love). Could any of us answer other than, "Jesus, everyone is my neighbor"? No, it's impossible.

We have been taught and know in our souls "that Jesus loves the little children, all the children in the world. Red, brown, yellow, black, and white, they are precious in his sight. Jesus loves the little children of the world." And if they are precious in Jesus' sight, then no one can be a follower of Jesus without embracing them as precious in our sight too. Jesus teaches us that we show our love for God by loving our neighbor. This shows we love God with all our heart, mind, strength, and soul. Jesus showed us that real love is sacrificial, steps out in faith, even when there are risks. Jesus risked it all to love us even when we rejected him.

In the first part of the story, Jesus shares that a man is robbed, beaten, and left by the side of the road. We hear that two different churchgoing folks pass by the wounded man and also leave him for dead. To rationalize their behavior, they first had to convince themselves that this man was not their neighbor. They dehumanize him as "other" (not one of us) so it becomes easier to claim that the man is not their problem, and that he probably got what he deserved for making a dangerous journey. At any rate if he is not one of "them," then they can turn a blind eye.

Jesus continues the story by revealing that one man came along and made a difference.

*"A despised Samaritan came along, and when he saw the man, he felt compassion for him. Going over to him, the Samaritan soothed his wounds with olive oil and wine and bandaged them. Then he put the man on his own donkey and took him to an inn, where he took care of him. The next day he handed the innkeeper two silver coins, telling him, 'Take care of this man. If his bill runs higher than this, I'll*

*pay you the next time I'm here.' Now which of these three would you say was a neighbor to the man who was attacked by bandits?" Jesus asked.*

*The man replied, "The one who showed him mercy." Then Jesus said,*

*"Yes, now go and do the same." Luke 10:29-37*



This one person showed compassion instead of indifference. He responded as Jesus would have. The Samaritan cared for the man because he could not dehumanize this man. Even if this man was a foreigner, or doing something illegal, this man was still seen as a child of God, a human being, and therefore a neighbor.

In our current culture, some feel threatened by those who seem different. Instead of faith and love, they respond with panic, insecurity, and fear. They do not see the "other" as a neighbor but rather as "invaders" to be feared. Intense fear leads to anger, and the volatile mix leads to hate (and hate is a cage we put ourselves into). Fear, anger, and hate allowed "good people" to become a mob that crucified our Lord and Savior. Fear leads to fight or flight. Even Jesus' disciples abandoned him. But that was not the end of the story! Jesus rose again! Christ's love inspired this small band of disciples to reject fear and embrace courage. They exchanged a survivalist mentality for the risking to love and heal. In it they found their own true selves. Even in danger they experienced peace.

Know this one person (Samaritan) made a difference in one person's life. Perhaps that one rescued/saved person made a difference in the lives of others. Fear will always present itself, but without fear there is no courage. The problems in our lives, relationships, neighborhoods, nation, and world can seem overwhelming. We don't have to change the whole world, but we can make a difference for one person at a time, and in doing so, we can revive our hope, courage, and purpose. God is in control! Remember, there are far more people working for justice and goodness than opposing them. Don't let helplessness or hopelessness trend in your head because Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit continues to make a difference one act of courage and kindness at a time.

God loves us all with no take-backs!

Pastor John

## Member Care Corner

Bethlehem United Church of Christ is blessed to have so many in this community of faith who give so generously of their time and talents, weekdays and weekends, mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Think about those folks you see who volunteer on a Sunday morning. They greet you warmly as you enter the building; they provide the snacks you eat in the Fellowship Hall; they teach children and youth Sunday School classes; they serve as ushers; they set up the elements for Communion; and they provide beautiful choral and instrumental music.

These are only a few ways, members of Bethlehem's community of faith reach out to others. No matter what your time and talents, there is a place for you to serve!

**Share Your  
Time & Talents**

We have transitioned to an online time and talent survey this year (paper copies are also available).

3 ways to sign up:

1. **Access the survey on the church website in the "About Us" section (after September 3rd)**
2. **Hard copies are now available in the church office or can be mailed to you by request.**
3. **A link to the electronic sign up as well as a PDF version will be sent out via group email the first week of September.**

**We ask that you please complete the survey by 9/15/19.** Someone will contact you when help is needed in the areas that you indicate.

**We appreciate all of our current volunteers and look forward to continuing to build our church community through our various ministries.**

*"Your talent is God's gift to you.  
What you do with it is your gift back to God."  
~Leo Buscaglia*

## Worship Ministry Team updates

The Worship Ministry Team reconvened on July 18 at the home of Jennifer Vasquez. Current members include: Caroline Ashenfelter, Harriette Ehnis, Pastor John Kennedy, Gary Rogers, John Samford, Lily Tinker Fortel, Jennifer Vasquez, and Tom Ziesemer. The Altar Guild will continue to be led by Michelle Loukotka. Our music director, Thomas Burton, resigned this summer. He will truly be missed. **Our new director of music, David Hahn, started working in late August. A nice welcome and bio about David can be found on page 2 of this newsletter.**

Over the summer months, a new sound board was installed in the sanctuary. This board provides more functional channels, and there will be more control over our radio broadcast. Board operators will be able to listen to what is being transmitted. The new board will also allow us to provide sound for future videoing. Many thanks to Jim Stadel for assisting in the selection and installation of the new system.

Several guest organists provided their expertise this summer in Gail Jennings absence. We are very appreciative of their contribution to our worship services. We welcomed Gail back to Bethlehem on August 18.

The voice of the Bethlehem community during worship is important to our team; therefore, we strive to provide lay liturgists at both services each and every Sunday. We are grateful to those who have served in the past, and we continue to seek volunteers. In our upcoming Worship Ministry Team meetings, we will continue to plan meaningful, spiritual worship services for the year. Your feedback and suggestions will always be thoughtfully welcomed by any member of our ministry team.

Harriette Ehnis, chair





# News from the Education Ministry Team

We are excited to start a new year of Sunday School. September 8 is Welcome Back Sunday. Join us for some delicious Washtenaw Dairy doughnuts during coffee hour after the 10 a.m. service. It will also be Blessing of the Backpacks Sunday. Youth can bring their backpacks to be blessed. We are once again asking the congregation to donate backpacks for youth in our community. We have a goal of 70 backpacks. We also welcome any school supplies, and we will take them to local agencies to distribute. We want all kids to be able to start the year supported.



Come take a look at our updated classrooms. The preschool has a facelift. Some of our old toys have been retired, and there are a new tent and a new play kitchen. Thank you to the Education Ministry Team for their hard work.

Thank you also to our newest member, Christina Wilk, and her son, Logan, for organizing the shelves. Christina will be joining the preschool volunteer team.

The old nursery has become our new classroom for grades 1 through 7. We are still working on some updates, so stay tuned. Thank you to the Facilities Ministry Team for replacing the tiny toilet and sink with full-size ones. Now our two classrooms will be adjoining, and siblings can be close. This will facilitate some of our all-age activities. Check it out as we continue the renovations.

Looking forward to seeing everyone back soon!

Thank you for your support,

Eileen Koprowski, chair



# Shine! General Synod 2019 - Highlights and Reflections

By Lily Tinker Fortel

I had the joy of attending UCC General Synod 32 in Milwaukee June 21–25. General Synod is our denomination's national gathering, which happens every two years. UCC members and partners from across the country and around the globe were present. There were

moments of profound joy and community solidarity, as you might expect when people with shared connection to the UCC gather. There were also moments of pain and tension, as you might expect when people with a vast array of beliefs and opinions gather in times such as these.

The theme of Synod 2019 was Shine! Our guiding scriptural text was Matthew 5:16: "In the same way, let your light shine before others." This was my first General Synod, and I am grateful for the opportunity I had to observe, and participate in, this key component of the UCC. Below, I've shared some highlights of my experience at Synod. I look forward to more opportunities for sharing with you in the weeks and months to come.

**Business and Plenaries:** Although I was not a delegate, I had the opportunity to observe the plenary sessions where, among other things, resolutions were voted on and board members and general officers were elected. It was fascinating to see the moderators lead the delegates through the business aspects of Synod.

**Worship:** There were several worship services during Synod. I deeply appreciated the opportunity to worship with so many people. The services were creative and represented the beautiful diversity of our denomination. We heard sermons by powerful preachers with beautiful and profound messages.

**Exhibit Hall:** I loved exploring the exhibit hall and talking with UCC staff from a variety of national offices, UCC members about the work they are doing, and others. There were booths for buying books, clergy garb, and other fun stuff. I'll be creating a bulletin board of all the fun freebies and swag I got in the exhibit hall.

**Networking:** Synod is full of great opportunities for networking. I was grateful to meet new people whom I hope to stay in touch with. I attended a luncheon for alums of Union Theological Seminary, where I completed my Master of Divinity in 2015. I had meals and great conversations with people who were student-



colleagues at Union, some of whom I planned to see there, and others I was surprised to run into in the halls of the Convention Center! Folks at the Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization (MESA) Team planned several events for Members in Discernment. I was

grateful for these opportunities for networking as well.

**Learning:** As a newbie to Synod, and someone relatively new to the UCC, attending Synod provided me countless opportunities to learn about our denomination. As a Member in Discernment on the path toward Ordination, it was important for me to see the UCC-in-action in this way. I also learned in other ways—from speeches, sermons, and presentations, to readings and conversations.

**Action:** Synod provided opportunities to put our faith in action. I was especially moved to attend a march to the local ICE (Immigrations and Customs Enforcement) in Milwaukee, which had been planned by local organizers in Milwaukee. Although this was not part of the planned agenda for Synod, all in attendance at Synod were invited to attend, and many did. It was a powerful witness to our faith and the UCC's vision of 'a just world for all,' and I was grateful to be a part of it.

I believe it's important for all of us as members of the UCC to understand at least some about what Synod is and how it plays out in real time. In the coming months, I'll be offering Spiritual Growth and Development opportunities related to Synod and the UCC broadly. We'll explore how Synod fits into the structure of the United Church of Christ. I'll highlight specific elements of Synod 2019. We'll explore some of the topics that were presented, and I'll share more reflections on my experiences there. I hope you'll join as you're able and interested. I'm always excited to have impromptu conversations as well!

I'm looking forward to the countless ways Bethlehem and you all—Bethlehem members—will continue to *shine* as summer transitions to fall and so many of you kick off the 2019-20 academic year! I'm wishing you all the beauty that new beginnings and the transition of seasons from summer to fall have to offer.

As ever, it is a joy to walk with you,

Lily



# Spiritual Growth and Development

Lily Tinker Fortel - Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

The Visitor

## ~~ AUGUST HIGHLIGHTS + SEPTEMBER SERVICE ~~



Summer Sunday school



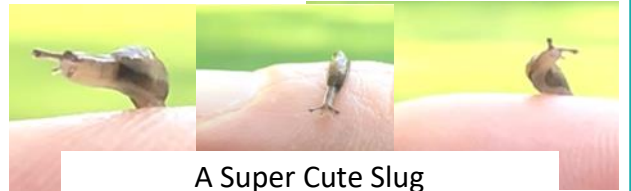
Board Game Nights in July and August



Food Gatherers 8/17- Thanks to all who joined us at Food Gatherers for our August Service Day!



Yard Art



A Super Cute Slug

### Service in September: Backpacks! Backpacks! Backpacks!

**Blessing of the Backpacks** Join us on September 8 at 10 o'clock worship as we kick off the 2019-20 school year! All students are invited to bring their backpacks to church that Sunday for Blessing of the Backpacks. We'll also commission our Sunday school teachers during this service.

**Backpack Drive** We're kicking off our annual backpack drive! All backpacks collected will be donated to area organizations working with children and youth. The Education Ministry Team has set an ambitious goal of **\*\*70 backpacks\*\*** this year! Please bring backpacks to worship in the coming weeks. We'll bless these backpacks on September 8. Backpacks ordered online can be shipped directly to the Bethlehem office. We'll also gladly receive financial donations for this effort; please put "Bethlehem Backpacks" in the memo line of your checks. We'll also accept donations of school supplies.



### Adult Faith Formation in September - Please join us!

2nd and 4th Thursday mornings  
**9/12 and 9/26** from 11:00-12:30

&

2nd and 4th Wednesday evenings  
**9/11 and 9/25** from 6:30-8:00 PM



### Speeches & Sermons of Synod 2019



Beginning in September, Lily will host a class where we explore the speeches and sermons of UCC's 2019 General Synod in Milwaukee.

Each class will involve an introduction to a specific component of the UCC, a scriptural text, and watching and discussing a speech or sermon from General Synod.

### Bethlehem Prayer Circle September 5, 11:30 a.m., lounge

All are invited to join us on the First and Third Thursdays at 11:30 for Prayer Circle. We share our own prayers of joy and concern, lift up prayers for those on Bethlehem's prayer list, and share a devotional or other spiritual exercise.



### YOGA IS BACK! All are invited to join us for very gentle yoga with Lily. Tuesdays at 5:30 PM Sept 3, 10, 17 and Oct 1

Wear comfy clothes, bring a water bottle. If you have a mat, please bring it. We have mats to share as well.





## ~~YOUTH GROUP + LOOKING FORWARD~~

### Fall Youth Group At-a-Glance - Mark Your Calendars

- Thursday 9/5 - 6:30-8:30 - YG Fall 2019 Kickoff @ BUCC
- Sunday 9/8 - 10:00 - Blessing of the Backpacks
- Thursday 9/12 - 6:30-8:30 - Board Game Night @ BUCC
- Sunday 10/6 - 1:00 - CROP Walk
- Thursday 10/10 - 6:30-8:30 - Board Game Night @ BUCC
- Saturday 10/19 - 2:00-4:00 - Service Day @ Food Gatherers
- Friday 10/25 (tentative) - Halloween Lock-In @ BUCC
- Wednesday 11/6 - 6:00 - Hops and Hallelujahs @ Downtown A2
- Thursday 11/14 - 6:30-8:30 - Board Game Night @ BUCC



### CROP Walk Sunday October 6



Calling all  
Pillamas!

All members of Bethlehem are invited to join this year's CROP Walk Team! Please mark your calendars for Sunday, October 6.

We might not be Pillamas (Panda-Llamas) again this year, but we will be awesome. More info coming from Youth Group in the weeks to come!



### Board Game Night - Second Thursdays

6:30-8:30 in the Youth Room

September 12, October 10, November 14



All are invited to join Bethlehem's Youth Group for our monthly board game night. Mark your calendars for the second Thursday of the month. Bring friends and favorite board games. We'll share a meal and then dive into the board games.

### Youth Room Changes and Improvements

More changes are in the works for the Youth Room! Thanks to Jesse Wilcox for all his help with painting and more. As you read in the Education Ministry Team article on page 6, there are also changes in the works for the nursery. The older elementary Sunday school room is moving upstairs from the basement. Thanks to Facilities Ministry, Bethlehem staff, and the Education Ministry Team for your work in making this shift!



### On the horizon

#### YOUTH@ANNUAL MEETING

October 11-12, 2019

Let Lily know if you have any interest in being a part of the Youth at Annual Meeting. Lots of fun things are scheduled for this, and it'll be a great opportunity to connect with UCC youth from across the state. This event will happen at the same time as the Michigan UCC Annual Conference.

#### 2020 National Youth Evening July 22-25, 2020

This is just to get it on the radar. Please pencil it in on your calendar and start exploring your interest in attending the UCC's National Youth Event next summer!

### 2019-20 Youth Group Kickoff Potluck

Thursday, Sept. 5, 6:30-8:30

Parents, youth, and siblings

are invited to join us for our  
Fall Youth Group kickoff potluck!!

Can you make it?!



- All are invited (but not required!) to bring a favorite dish to share for our potluck. If you plan to bring something, please let me know what it is!
- We're also asking youth to bring a favorite picture of yourself for building our youth group altar (if you don't have it in print, send it to Lily via email and she can print it out).
- Parents and siblings are invited. We'll do some things as a whole group and some things separately as we get to know one another and discuss plans, hopes, and expectations for Youth Group!

Calling ALL  
Bethlehem  
Folks  
(not just youth!)  
Community  
Service Day at  
Food Gatherers  
warehouse  
(Carrot Way)  
Saturday,  
Oct 19, 2-4

Youth + families are invited to this fun service day. Sign up by the office, or let Lily know.

## MEMORIALS & GIFTS

### Gifts received through the end of July

#### ART FAIR PARKING FUNDRAISER

Laura & Marty Seyfried 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Honorarium

#### GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Beverly Hanselman Memorial

#### HABITAT YOUTH TRIP

Karen Slotten Honorarium

#### PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Ron Gentner's 93<sup>rd</sup> Birthday Memorial  
John Nimz Memorial

### Gifts received through the end of August

#### CHRISTMAS SOCK & MITTEN FUND

Jean O'Reilly Memorial

#### CURRENT FUND

Marie Slotten Memorial

#### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY OUTREACH PROGRAM

Marie Slotten Memorial

#### PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Marie Slotten Memorial

#### SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Sylvia Kalmbach Memorial

#### RADIO BROADCASTS

August 11 In memory of **Frederick and Lela Keppler** from their children.

August 18 In memory of my grandmother **Lorena Stein**, a life-long member of Bethlehem Church, with love from Mary Jean Raab.

### HAVE YOU SPONSORED A RADIO BROADCAST LATELY?

A sponsorship is a great way to honor or remember a special person, a special day, or a special event. A sponsorship is \$230 and is read on the radio and printed in the weekly bulletin and monthly Visitor newsletter. In addition, general donations of any amount are appreciated. A sign up is located near the office, or simply call the office at 734-665-6149.

A huge, heartfelt thank-you to everyone for your calls, cards, and most of all your prayers for Paul's recent surgery. The surgery was a total success, and the pathology report indicated that all cancer was removed and all margins were clear. Paul is recovering nicely. We are indeed grateful and feel blessed to have so many caring people in our lives! Prayers DO get answered!

With sincere gratitude and love,  
The Marshalls



I would like to say a thank-you to Brian Paton for organizing the annual Bethlehem baseball outing to see our Detroit Tigers. He did a great job and, with the help of Sheila and Jacob, made the bus trip comfortable and fun. The pizza was great. You're the best. Play ball!

Tom Zieseemer

## *Bethlehem's Tree of Life*

If you are looking for a personal and meaningful gift for a loved one or a special occasion, 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. Info & order forms are available at the 4th avenue entrance.



July 2019	Year to Date	YTD Target	2019/2020 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$88,510	\$79,901	\$479,406
Expenses	\$64,499	\$88,689	\$532,136
Net	\$24,011	(\$8,788)	(\$52,730)





If you're looking for a festive evening in early October, please mark your calendars for Friday, October 4. The Bethlehem Fellowship Ministry Team is once again hosting an Oktoberfest "picnic." It will run from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. with the food line open from 6:00 to 7:30 p.m. We are serving brats/hot dogs, German potato salad, spatzens, sauerkraut, chips, pies, beer and wine (for sale/cash bar), coffee, water, and lemonade.

The success of Oktoberfest is made possible by all our wonderful volunteers. **Signup sheets for how you may help are outside the office beginning September 1.**

Tickets go on sale September 8 between and after services, or at the church office during the week. We do ask that you pay for your tickets at that time. You may also call the office to reserve tickets: 734-665-6149. **Ticket sales are limited to 230, and no tickets will be sold at the door. Last day for ticket sales is September 29.** We know it will be another wonderful evening.



## 2019 - 2020 OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES at PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER



Friday Food Distribution  
starts September 13!

2019

9/24

10/22

11/26



2020

1/28

3/24

4/28

5/26



### 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.

Signup is outside the Bethlehem office.

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

### PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD FRIDAY FRESH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Friday Fresh Food distribution takes place 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!

This also takes place at Peace Neighborhood Center

**Questions? Contact Sue Muir at [suemuir@comcast.net](mailto:suemuir@comcast.net) or 734-604-6128**



## 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  
**Financial Administrator:** Betty Clark  
**Parish Administrator:** Julie Rhodes  
**Parish Secretary:** Donna Whitney  
**Director of Music:** David Hahn  
**Organist:** Gail Jennings  
**Director of Handbells:** Jim Rowan  
**Sunday School Nursery Teacher:** Kelsey Postler

### MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRS

**Finance:** Karen Samford  
**Facilities:** Tom Ziesemer  
**Education:** Eileen Koprowski  
**Worship:** Harriette Ehnis  
**Member Care:** Jenny Foster  
**Welcome:** Kurt Schmerberg  
**Outreach:** Laura Seyfried  
**Fellowship:** Jan Eadie  
**Youth & Young Adult:** Katie Rowan  
**Bethlehem Cemetery:** Susan Irwin  
**Nominations Committee:** Cresson Slotten

### LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

**President:** John Samford  
**Vice President:** Ron Dechert  
**Secretary:** Sue Wortman  
**Treasurer:** Jim Rowan  
**At-Large Members:**  
 Judy Coucouvanis  
 Pat Huibregtse  
 Pam Rutledge  
**Ex Officio:** Rev. John Kennedy