

The Visitor

January 2020

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

“In The Year of Our Lord, 2020”

By Rev. John Kennedy

After Jesus was born in Bethlehem in the territory of Judea during the rule of King Herod, magi (wise men) came from the east to Jerusalem. They asked, “Where is the newborn king of the Jews? We’ve seen his star in the east, and we’ve come to honor him.” – Gospel of Matthew 2:1-2

It is The Year of Our Lord, Two-Thousand and Twenty, 2020? Or is It? It’s not a question, as much as it is an invitation from God. An invitation to every pastor, congregation, person, and family. Will we search for, recognize, and follow the “Light of Christ” wherever we see, and wherever it leads us? Will we reflect God’s light so that 2020, will be a year of hope and light, that shines in the darkness or not.

Throughout history, wise women and men have searched for God’s light. Epiphany is known as the “The Season of Light”. We know the story well, three wise men (scholars & scientists) from the East, observe a star rising in the West. These men of wisdom study many kinds of knowledge (nature, ancient texts, languages, astronomy, mathematics, alchemy). These scholars are wise enough to know that they “do not know it all”, and that wisdom and revelation come from many sources beyond their own region and culture. Upon seeing the Star, they begin

studying prophetic writings. In the Hebrew Scriptures, they discover a scroll from the prophet Micah (5:2), telling of a king that will come in a time of darkness born to a young maiden. With this insight, the magi journey hundreds of miles through a wilderness with many risks. They seek, risk, share their treasure, and worship an infant king. Ironically, Jesus’ own people, Herod and the rest of Jerusalem respond with great fear and seek to destroy Jesus, the child king. How is it that the foreigners from a distant land and culture are the wise heroes of this story? They become the first followers of Jesus and the first to share the news in their own country. And how is it that Jesus’ own people do not recognize God’s light and instead choose darkness?

(continued on page 2)

**Deadline for the
February Visitor is
Monday, February 3**



In This Issue

Pastor John	Page 1-4	Happenings	Page 7
Memorials & Gifts	Page 5	Lily’s December Highlights	Page 8
From the President	Page 5	Youth Group	Page 9
Cemetery	Page 5	Budget	Page 9
Outreach Update	Page 6	Advent/Christmas Highlights	Pages 10-11
Worship Ministry	Page 6	Who We Are	Page 12



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

(Continued from page 1)

*“In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. The Word was with God in the beginning. Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn’t extinguish the light. The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world. The light was in the world, and the world came into being through the light, but the world didn’t recognize the light. **The light came to his own people, and his own people didn’t welcome him**”. –John 1:1-12*

This year of 2020, (an election year) will be a year of increased tension, danger, and conflict for our nation and world. It will also be a year of opportunity where faithful and brave people will choose to reflect God’s light into the darkness. How do we “resolve” in 2020, to search for God’s light; risk following that light, share our resources, and worship our God as the wise ones from the East and the shepherds. How will pastors, and faith leaders reflect and model God’s light in a way that distinguishes darkness from light, with courage and love. How do we prioritize the many competing needs in our lives?

I want to share a New Year letter written by Rev. Brian McClaren. McClaren is a prophetic and towering figure in Christianity today. He is considered one of the most significant theologians, pastors, prolific author, and church growth consultants in the world today. McClaren "nails it" with so much precision (with what many of us pastors have been saying) about the future of The Church. This is the route to authentic spiritual growth that will last and lead to congregational vitality and growth. No real growth will happen for churches that don't take risks. The younger generation will not stand for it.

Just as the Apostle Paul wrote letters (Epistles) to the early congregations, McClaren writes letters meant to be heard by the larger Church. The letters were almost always written to address conflict and division in local congregations, and to guide, encourage, and help Christ followers be the church. The following letter is from Rev. Bryan McClaren,

New Year’s Resolutions for Pastors in 2020

January 1, 2020 | By BRIAN MCLAREN

“Having been a pastor for 24 years, and having befriended and coached pastors for forty years, I know how hard the job is. Really, there’s nothing I’ve ever done that comes close to the difficulty, complexity, demands, dangers, temptations, and drains (or the joys, rewards, value, impact, and intensity) of being a good pastor in these times.

I remember drifting towards discouragement whenever I defined success as meeting everyone’s expectations, and I remember feeling I was in my zone when I accepted my calling to set wholesome expectations ... inspiring people to become more Christ-like, to join God in the healing of the world, starting with yourself.

I remember the constant pressure to keep everyone happy ... even though happy people normally don’t change. (In other words, the better job I did keeping everyone happy or comfortable, the worse job I did in leading them into growth.)

When the job is this tough, it’s tempting to give up “playing to win” and settle for “playing not to lose.”

It’s also tempting to lose your grip on your original calling and vision, and settle for trying to get through another year (or week, or day) without too many angry emails.

But here’s the thing: 2020 will probably be the most significant year in your whole ministry.

If you play it safe this year, if you avoid all risks, if you keep your head down (and your neck “in”), if you’re focused on saving your skin over anything else ... think of the moment you’ll miss: the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to speak up, show up, and stand up tall in a time of global danger and opportunity.

But if you seize this critical moment, this could be the most important and fruitful year of your ministry, and perhaps your life. (I didn’t say easiest and most comfortable; I said most important and fruitful.)

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That's why I'd like to propose these 3 resolutions or goals for 2020.

Smoke What You're Selling. *In other words, be sure that you actually enjoy the abundant life you are proclaiming to others. Enjoy God. Enjoy life. Enjoy your family. Enjoy the simple things. Enjoy human things. If you work so hard at helping others experience abundant life that you don't ... neither will they.*

This means building your schedule around – not what's most urgent, not who complains loudest, not who is most demanding, but rather, around what matters!

Time to be alone, time for silence and contemplation, time for prayer and meditation, time with mentors and friends who encourage you, time reading or listening to podcasts or going to seminars and conferences for your own personal development, time with your hobbies (if you don't have them – start this year, because they are your unique way of enjoying the gift of life). Don't leave your leftovers for your spouse and children and siblings and other family members (as I too often have done). Block out time for them, which will require planning and forethought. If you and they don't have fun this year ... if you as a family don't plan some adventures and celebrative experiences ... it will be because you don't start the year setting aside some time. Do that now, right at the year's start – please!

Clarify your job description. If you don't have a written job description, change that, and if you do, see if it needs updating and improvement. Look at problems you're having, and see if they can be improved by clarifying your roles in your congregation. If you need a coach to help you with this, find one. (Center for Progressive Renewal is a great place to look.) For you to lead well in 2020, you need to have a clear mandate to lead, and clarity among your fellow leaders about what that looks like.

***Get political.** *This is an inescapably political year. It's a year we as individuals, neighbors, parties, states, and a nation have a massive discussion (often in the form of arguments) about how we will use our wealth and power. If you opt out, you're missing a chance to add a voice of moral insight, pastoral wisdom, biblical understanding, theological depth, and spiritual discernment to the national and local debate, and you're leaving your flock to the influence of cable news pundits and radio talk shows ... and THAT would be spiritual malpractice. Remember, to avoid political subjects is itself a political act. It means that you're choosing silence in the face of injustice, which is another word for complicity.*

I know that third one is challenging for many pastors. You may be wondering, "How do I get political in a constructive way as opposed to a destructive way?" I'd recommend you speak frequently about the biggest problems we face as a species – the 5 P's if you will:

The Planet. *God told us to care for it as good stewards. We're trashing it as greedy, heartless dictators. Climate change is the most urgent of our problems, but it's the tip of the melting iceberg. Look at the extinction and loss of insects (including pollinators, who are essential for 30% of our calories), birds, mammals, fish ... Think about loss of soil, fresh water, coral reefs, fisheries ... Think about how many paradises are being paved for parking lots or fossil fuel extraction.*

Poverty. *In 2015, 80 rich individuals owned as much wealth as half of the earth's people. In 2016, the number went down to 61. In 2017, it was 42. In 2018, it was 26 (And some people think it was 8, because we're undercounting how poor the poorest people are.) Think about that for a while, not just in terms of money, but also in terms of power. Think of how much power those 26 people have over the lives of the rest of humanity. That's a problem.*

Peace. *When the planet is being exploited, and so are the poor, the results are predictable: drought, flood, famine, hunger, mass migration, petty crime, organized crime, political corruption, civil war, world war, nuclear war. Dr. King was right: our choice is no longer between violence and nonviolence: it is between nonviolence and nonexistence.*

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In times of stress, we are more likely to lash out at others, to blame others, to choose fight and flight over love and curiosity, to put winning battles over winning friends.

Political corruption. *We're in the midst of a constitutional crisis and what some call a cold civil war. At the root of our political problems are racism (America's original sin) and greed (its other original sin), both of which fuel abuses of power at all levels of government. And sadly, many religious leaders are chaplains to the corruption, for which they are handsomely rewarded, if not in terms of money, then in terms of access, status, prestige, and power. Behind the scenes, national governments are becoming puppets of a global oligarchy ... what has been called an iron triangle in which corrupt presidents, congressmen, and other officials make deals with organized criminals and oligarchs. If you haven't seen this unfolding, I don't know what to say ...*

People (all people), no exceptions. *This past week, we've seen another wave of vile anti-Semitic attacks. Whether it's Jews, Muslims, LGBTQ persons, refugees, immigrants, Mexicans, Sikhs, Hindus, liberals, conservatives, the media, or whoever ... we have a growing number of religious and political demagogues who build their base by scapegoating some vulnerable group and blaming them for all of our problems. Suddenly, Jesus' teachings about loving our neighbor as ourselves (no exceptions, including our Jewish, Buddhist, Christian, atheist, Mexican, or any other kind of neighbor) seems positively revolutionary, and the same goes for Paul's words about how when we're in Christ, we no longer see people in terms of ethnicity, gender, religion, socioeconomic status, etc.*

Almost every Bible story addresses these issues. Once you start noticing these themes in the biblical text, you'll wonder how so many people miss them, or avoid them. I'm recommending that you join the growing number of leaders who are seeing the political dimension of genuine spirituality and the revolutionary nature of divine love ... and who are speaking up about it.

You could take those five words and put them on a 3 X 5 card and paste them on your desk or mirror or dashboard ... just to remind you to preach about them, pray about them, sing about them, make plans to act to address them, etc.

You could set up a meeting with your worship team and ask them to find songs about them every single week (Convergence Music Project is a great place to start.) You could ask your kids and youth ministry leaders to include them in your work with the rising generation.

You could plan one or more conferences or retreats or book study groups to address them.

But one thing is for sure: if you care about them enough to speak and pray about them, you'll inspire others to do so too ... and if you don't, you won't.

If you'd like some other ways to get involved constructively in this political year, Vote Common Good is a great place to start. I'm working part time with VCG this year, and we're developing lots of additional resources to help you. Stay tuned.

A year from now, when 2021 begins, I hope you can look back on 2020 and feel that you "smoked what you were selling," that you got clarity on your job description, and that you were political in the best possible way." (If you know a pastor who would benefit from this post, please share it).

God loves us all with no take-backs!

Pastor John

Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received in December, 2019

BETHLEHEM CEMETERY

Norm & Helen Grob

CHRISTMAS FUND

Carole Katz Memorial

CURRENT FUND

Conrad & Norma Foster Honorarium

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Barbara Fisher Memorial
 Norm & Helen Grob
 Martha Holliday Memorial
 Carole Katz Memorial
 The Kempfert & Seeger Family Memorial
 Waldemar & Marianne Pollee Memorial

OUTREACH MINISTRY

Carole Katz Memorial

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Betty Diuble Memorial
 Bill Fellenberger Memorial
 Lela & Fred Keppler Memorial
 Vera & Karl Kleinschmidt Memorial
 Hilda McLaughlin Memorial

RADIO FUND

Carolyn Ferri Memorial
 Lois Haeussler Memorial

RADIO SPONSORSHIP

December 1 Celebration of **Stanley Finkbeiner's** 95th
 Birthday from his wife & family

December 22 In memory of **Art & Erna Jahnke** and
Shorty & Mary Jahnke
 from Wayne & Karen Jahnke

Gifts listed were received through December 31, 2019

THANK YOU

Once again the church Christmas decorations have been taken down and packed away by a great group of people. Many thanks to the following:

- Tom & Jane Ziesemer
- Jim & Sallie Stadel
- Jim & Katie Rowan
- Brian* & Shelia Paton
- Joe & Jane Eadie
- John Irwin
- Jim Judson
- Barb Marshall
- Kaye Harwood
- Pam Widmayer
- Cresson Sloten
- Kurt Schmerberg



*the "aggressive cleaner 😊"

From Your President's Desk



"[The Finance Ministry Team] Shall work in conjunction with an external auditor for audits to be performed at least every three years to verify the proper handling of Church funds and the accuracy of the financial records of the Church."

--Roles and Responsibilities, Bethlehem United Church of Christ **Bylaws**

The Finance Ministry Team (FMT) has discharged the above responsibility and the result was a **"clean audit."** Working with the church's Financial Administrator Betty Clark, Altruic Advisors, a full-service accounting firm for nonprofit organizations, examined BUCC's financial records for 2018. The FMT met for a wrap-up meeting with an Altruic representative.

Some information was still needed to complete the audit and the majority has been provided to Altruic. They made a few suggestions on how to refine policies and procedures to adhere to "best practices" and those suggestions have been taken.

One of the more surprising results of the audit to me was that despite keeping separate records, Bethlehem Cemetery is *not* financially independent of Bethlehem United Church of Christ. Financial records and fiscal years for the two are distinct, allowing Altruic to give both entities positive reports.

If you have further questions on details of the audit or other financial matters, please see any member of the Finance Ministry Team.

Due to when things fall on the calendar, Leadership Council has not yet met since my last Visitor article. We still have it on our agenda to address our responsibilities to **"engage in strategic planning for the future of the Church"** using all the resources at our disposal in a responsible way. Stay tuned for details.

FROM THE BETHLEHEM CEMETERY BOARD

As mentioned in the previous editions of the Visitor, there will be an increase in the price of lot sales, burials, and other services at the cemetery beginning January 1, 2020. This is necessary to cover the additional costs of operating Bethlehem Cemetery. Members of Bethlehem Church will still receive a 10-percent discount.



OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

The next Outreach Ministry Team (OMT) meeting will be held on Thursday, January 30th at 7:00pm (location TBD).

OMT will be promoting support for the upcoming mission project sponsored by the Education Ministry, *Easy Water for Everyone*.



Financial contributions will be made from the Outreach budget and designated donations to the following local organizations: Alpha House/IHN, Food Gatherers, and Peace Neighborhood Center in the amount \$2,500 each in the next month.

Community outreach opportunities for February 2nd (Super Bowl Sunday) include volunteering to prepare dinner at the Food Gatherers Community Kitchen (Delonis Center) and preparing/serving dinner/helping with kids' after dinner activities at Alpha House. The sign up sheet for the monthly Community Kitchen opportunity is located on the bulletin board outside the church office. A Sign-up Genius for Alpha House is open to interested volunteers (contact Laura Seyfried with your email address to be added to the notification list). Details about volunteering at Alpha House can be found on the church website.

Thank you for your continued support of Bethlehem's Outreach Ministry activities!

—Laura Seyfried
Outreach Ministry Team Leader

WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM UPDATE

From Harriette Ehnis

This fall, the Worship Ministry Team welcomed Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel and David Hahn, Director of Music to our group. We immediately began exploring creative ideas related to worship. Pastor Lily shared several videos from Union Theological Seminary to stimulate discussion. This led to our Totenfest service which included photos of those to be remembered. Our team received positive feedback regarding this service.

Planning for the advent season and Christmas Eve was exciting and rewarding. Many folks eagerly participated in the Living Nativity.

The event was well attended not only by Bethlehem members but by the Ann Arbor community. Pastor John reflected on conversations of passers by on how meaningful the Living Nativity was to them. Our ministry team has already started to plan for this activity next year.

The Bethlehem choir, under the direction of David Hahn, presented a beautiful cantata entitled "A Manger Suite" on December 8th. The following Sunday, a tremendous children's pageant was performed to the delight of all. All three Christmas Eve services of scriptures, carols, and candlelight were planned. The choir, instrumentalists, and bell choir all added to the meaningful, celebratory coming of Christ.

The Worship Ministry Team wants to thank all lay liturgists, family advent wreath lighters, readers, and altar guild for their participation in making the advent season so meaningful. We are now looking forward to planning a thoughtful and reflective Lenten season.

Your Worship Ministry Team: Caroline Ashenfelter, Harriette Ehnis, David Hahn, Pastor John Kennedy, Gary Rogers, John Samford, Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel, Jennifer Vasquez, and Tom Ziesemer.

HAPPENINGS




Shawl Ministry
Prayer Shawl Ministry
 Join us Wednesdays
January 22, & 29
 Wednesdays from
1 - 3 pm
 in the Lounge



Sunday, February 2
Food Gatherers Volunteer Day
 At Delonis Center
12 - 2:30 pm Sign up near the office

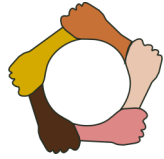



HOLY ROLLERS
PRETZELS
 Saturday, January 18
 Saturday, February 15
 Rolling at 8 am, sales from 11 am - 1 pm
 (Call 734-665-6149 to preorder)

Bethlehem Veterans' Monthly Breakfast
 Friday, Feb. 7, 8:30 am
 Classic Cup Café, Jackson Rd.
Questions? Contact Tom Ziesemer

Bethlehem Prayer Circle
 Please join us!
 January 16, 11:30 am - 12:15 pm
 February 6 & 20, 11:30 am - 12:15 pm
 Join us in the Schmale Lounge
 as we lift up prayers and share a spiritual exercise



To my Bethlehem Friends -
*This is just a small note, but it is filled with a BIG Thank You!!! Personal thank you notes will be coming your way soon, but for now I want you to know that the generous gifts I received as I ended my employment at Bethlehem were overwhelming! I cannot begin to tell you how touched I was by your generosity and love. My 6 years at Bethlehem were such a blessing and it was truly one of the most welcoming and enjoyable jobs that I have ever had (aside from babysitting my grand kids of course!). I wish you all the best in 2020. My 2020 will be filled with caring for my parents, running 4 elections, welcoming a new grand baby, celebrating the marriage of my daughter, and other adventures I have yet to know about. I will be back in the Bethlehem office at the end of March as Gwen travels, so please stop by and say HI. Wishing you joy,
 Donna Whitney*

Winter is here... The days are short and cold, so it's a good time to check out the used books for sale in the Bethlehem Library to curl up with on a cold, cloudy day. Additional books are added regularly so come check out what's there. Books are just \$1.00 each and there is a cash box on the right wall as you walk into the Library for your payment. And on the far right wall (passed the Food Gatherers food donation barrel) are also books for children and young independent readers. This project is managed by the Women of Bethlehem.

If you are interested in donating books, we sell just NOVELS. Please...no cookbooks, self-help or instruction books....just NOVELS. There is a bin inside the door to place donated books.

It's that time of the year to sign up for **Winter/Spring volunteer opportunities at Peace Neighborhood Center** for the After-School Feeding program. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the Church Office.  Questions? Contact Sue Muir at suemuir@comcast.net. Thanks for considering!

Sign-Up For Tuesday After-School Program
Time Commitment is 2:45–4:45 PM
January 28:

Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
March 24:	
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
April 28:	
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
May 26:	
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____
Name _____	Email _____

Spiritual Growth and Development

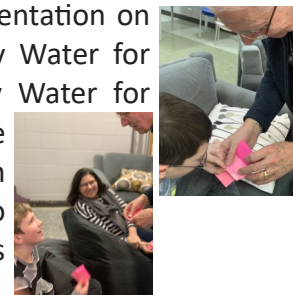
Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel, Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

~ ~ DECEMBER HIGHLIGHTS ~ ~

YOUTH GROUP



Bethlehem member Fritz Port joined confirmation on December 5 for a presentation on the organization Easy Water for Everyone. In addition to sharing about Easy Water for Everyone, Fritz discussed his own faith journey with the confirmands. Easy Water for Everyone is the Education Ministry Team's 2020 Mission Project. There will be opportunities for the broader congregation to learn more about the organization and for giving in the coming months. Thank you to Fritz for taking the time to share with the group. Here are photos of Fritz showing the confirmands how dialysis filters are used to filter water.



Christmas Lock-In

Our Youth Group Christmas Lock-in was lots of fun! Jesse was back, and the youth were excited to play sardines. The night also included a visit to Bethlehem's Living



Nativity, a lengthy scavenger hunt, great Christmas movies, and lots of good food. Thank you to Karen Kennedy for providing food. Thanks also to Jesse, Pastor John, and Jane and Kurt Schmerberg for helping out during the lock-in!



THANK
YOU
SO
MUCH

A huge thank you to all who helped out with Youth Group and Confirmation in December!

Thank you to Sue and Roy Muir, Sue Wortman, Karen Kennedy, and Katie Rowan for preparing meals for the Youth Group and

Confirmation in December.

- Thank you to Fritz Port for joining the Confirmation class on December 5, for a wonderful presentation on Easy Water for Everyone.
- Thank you to Pastor John and Karen Kennedy, Jane and Kurt Schmerberg, and Jesse Wilcox for helping at the Youth Group Christmas Lock-In.
- Special Thank You' to Jane Schmerberg and Jesse Wilcox for staying for the whole night!

CHRISTMAS PAGEANT

Heaven and Nature Sing, the 2019 Christmas Pageant, was a real hit! Huge thanks to Sarah Herwick and Ellie Vasquez for directing, and to the entire Education Ministry Team for your support. Thanks also to the



Fellowship Ministry Team for coordinating the wonderful potluck, and Nancy Pieske for the amazing Advent Workshop following worship!



Food Gatherers Volunteer Day

Thank you to Bethlehem members who joined our volunteer day at Food Gatherers on Saturday, December 21. Mark your calendars for our next volunteer day: Saturday, February 15 from 2-4pm.



Advent Giving - Thank You!

Thank you to everyone who contributed to Bethlehem's Advent Giving opportunities! In December, we delivered over 30 boardgames, nearly 60 books and



nearly 50 gift cards to our friends at Alpha House and Peace Neighborhood Center.



We also delivered hats, mittens, and gloves to area organizations, including to our friends at Groundcover. Way to go, Bethlehem!

CHRISTMAS CAROLING



Thank you to all who caroled at Evangelical Home and Brecon Village on Friday, December 20!

Over 20 people joined the fun! Big thanks to Cress and Karen Sloten for coordinating the caroling, and hosting the group following.



Spiritual Growth and Development

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel - Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

~ ~ YOUTH GROUP + LOOKING FORWARD ~ ~

Care Packages

The youth group will be preparing care packages for Bethlehem's college students. If you know a Bethlehem college student, please send Lily their address by January 20.



Spirituality and Song - January & February

Sign up now for an exploration of spirituality and song! Our exploration will include sessions at Bethlehem beginning in late-January and continuing into February. On February 7, attend a performance by Carrie Newcomer at the Ark.



About Carrie Newcomer: *Carrie Newcomer weaves her life and her art together, with music, community activism, and personal concerns all playing a role. She's one of those people who exudes a spirituality that's all her own, and she has to be seen in concert to be truly appreciated. Says novelist Barbara Kingsolver: "She's a poet, storyteller, snake-charmer, good neighbor, friend and lover, minister of the wide-eyed gospel of hope and grace."*



Gentle Yoga at Bethlehem

All are invited to join Gentle Yoga. Tuesdays January 7, 14, 21, and 28 at 5:30 pm in the Gallery.

board game night

games & fun February 13 6:30-8:30

hosted by Bethlehem youth group

YOUTH GROUP & CONFIRMATION IN JANUARY
MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Thursday, January 16

- Confirmation 6:30-8:30pm
- Help Bethlehem host "Cuts that Care" (optional)

Thursday, January 23

- Youth Group 6:30 pm

Sunday, January 26

- Confirmation Class 11:30am-1:30pm

Thursday, January 30

- Youth Group 6:30 pm

February 7-9: WINTER FEST 2020

- Please mark your calendars & let Lily know ASAP if you're planning to attend. We need at least five youth committed to make the trip this year!

Meditation Group

Lily is working with a Bethlehem member to explore the possibility of a meditation/mindfulness group at Bethlehem. Are you interested? The times we are considering include Wednesdays 12noon; Tuesdays 11am; Tuesdays 6:30-7:30. Please let Lily know if you're interested, and if you have a time preference.

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 at SignUpGenius.com.

Radio Ministry

December 2019	Year to Date	YTD Target	2019/2020 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$265,213	\$279,654	\$479,406
Expenses	\$282,951	\$310,413	\$532,136
Net	(\$17,738)	(\$30,759)	(\$52,730)

Living Nativity



Gift
for

Jessie



All Church Game Nite

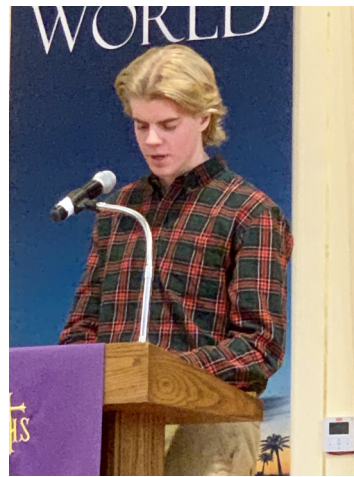
Carolers & Cookies



Advent Play



Advent



Christmas Worship



Potluck





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

<u>STAFF</u>	<u>MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRS</u>	<u>LEADERSHIP COUNCIL</u>
Pastor: Rev. John Kennedy	Finance: Karen Samford	President: John Samford
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Orval L.E. Willimann	Facilities: Tom Ziesemer	Vice President: Ron Dechert
Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development: Lily Tinker Fortel	Education: Eileen Koprowski	Secretary: Sue Wortman
Financial Administrator: Betty Clark	Worship: Harriette Ehnis	Treasurer: Jim Rowan
Parish Administrator: Julie Rhodes	Member Care: Jenny Foster	At-Large Members:
Administrative Assistant: Gwenda Mayes	Welcome: Kurt Schmerberg	Judy Coucouvanis
Director of Music: David Hahn	Outreach: Laura Seyfried	Pat Huibregtse
Organist: Gail Jennings	Fellowship: Jan Eadie	Pam Rutledge
Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan	Youth & Young Adult: Katie Rowan	Ex Officio: Rev. John Kennedy
Sunday School Nursery Teacher: Kelsey Postler	Bethlehem Cemetery: Susan Irwin	
	Nominations Committee: Cresson Slotten	