



The Visitor

March 2020

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

"Walking with Jesus: A Lenten Journey 2020"

by Rev. John Kennedy

"Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. The tempter came and said to him, 'Since you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread.' But he answered, 'It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.'"

- Matthew 4:1-4

The story of Jesus' "Temptation in the Wilderness", raises many troublesome questions. Why would a good God intentionally tempt and test anyone? Since God, is a good and gracious God, why is evil and suffering even allowed to exist? The "Journey of Life" is already challenging enough (pain, hunger, illness, violence, and grief) without cosmic forces subjecting humans to a "game of chance" while observers cast bets on who will be the survivor. The question of "Why would a good God permit the existence of evil" has been asked since the beginning of the human experience and is called the "Theodicy".

"As defined by theologian Dr. Alvin Plantinga, "Theodicy" is the "the question of why God permits evil". Theodicy is defined as a theological construct that attempts to vindicate God in response to the evidential problem of evil that seems inconsistent with the existence of an omnipotent and omnibenevolent deity. Another definition of theodicy is the vindication of divine goodness and providence in view of the existence of evil. The word *theodicy* derives from the Greek words Θεός *Theos* and δίκη *dikē*. *Theos* is translated "God" and *dikē* can be translated as either "trial" or "judgement". Thus, theodicy literally means "justifying God". There is a story, where the question is turned upside down. A person asks God, why do you allow suffering, and God responds, "I was going to ask you the same thing, why do you (humans) allow suffering?"

(continued on page 2)

**Deadline for the
April Visitor is
Monday, March 30**



In This Issue

Pastor John	Page 1-2	Happenings	Page 7
Holy Week /Worship	Page 3	Lily's February Highlights	Page 8
Congregational Mtg.	Page 3	Youth Group	Page 9
Outreach Update	Page 4	Welcome New Members	Page 10
Memorials & Gifts	Page 5	Cemetery	Page 11
From the President	Page 5	Budget	Page 11
Lenten Service Projects	Page 6	Who We Are	Page 12



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

(continued from page 1)

Every week, I walk with people who are in pain, crises, or grieving. Death, illness, divorce, the loss of an occupation, or a betrayal affects us all. When I am asked this question, my response is, “I don’t have answers, I can only share my ongoing journey and lived experience”. I can tell you what I hold onto in fail and yet, that faith is constantly be challenged and lived day to day.

Experiencing pain and suffering is natural and it is so human to ask “when will the hurting stop” or “why did God do this?”. There are many forms of wellness and suffering. Physiologically, we are hard-wired to experience pain and pleasure, hunger and fullness, fatigue and rest, danger and safety, illness and wellness. No one lives a human experience without these responses, they are what help us survive. We are healthier when we listen to our bodies. The very systems that help us experience “well-being” are the same systems that alert us to something “bad” happening. Pain is an alarm that alerts us to pay attention.

But what about emotional and spiritual pain or well-being? I believe that there are hard-wired spiritual experiences that are connected. When I am with someone who is dying it seems that all of the physical and earthly concerns seem to fade away and other deeper spiritual struggles surface; struggles that go deeper even than emotions, such as; shame/grace, guilt/forgiveness, grief/comfort, feeling unworthy/unconditional love, betrayal/loyalty, ambiguity about death/resurrection, separation/connection, and especially abandonment/embrace. These spiritual struggles are not a sign of a lack of faith, but rather the life and struggle of faith. These forms of spiritual pain happen because we are wired to; love, trust, forgive, accept grace, and embrace hope.

In the story of the wilderness, God in Christ, comes near, and shares our human experience fully. Jesus does not escape pain, hunger, or temptation to use his gifts for selfish purposes. Jesus does not fight off those temptations but let’s go and grabs onto to something else, someone else. Jesus, in faith, trusts that he has not been abandoned, and that God has walked with him into, through, and out of the wilderness. He trusts that God does not tempt or test, but rather gives us strength, and reminds us of God’s true nature. God has created life in such a way that life defeats death. That love, grace and forgiveness are more powerful than any other resource, and that they are always there for us no matter where our journey leads.

God loves us all with no take-backs!

Pastor John



“You are God’s field; God’s building”

Through the One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) offering, we are planting seeds of new life. Together, we are investing in communities worldwide: providing education to girls and boys, empowering communities through vocational training, supporting microcredit lending and seeing people through to self-sufficiency, empowering

families with skills to support themselves and their neighbors, and participating in sustainable solutions that offer dignity to all. These are just a few ways the OGHS offering touches God’s children, in addition to disaster relief and refugee initiatives.

Through your generosity, the world is a better place. But more is needed. On March 22, you have an opportunity to plant seeds into the lives of others. Be a co-worker with God. Building planting, watering...and trusting that God gives growth to all good gifts sown in faith. Thank you for your partnership. Thank you for your generosity.



Holy Week

- Apr 5** Palm Sunday + Potluck Brunch
After 10:00 AM worship,
fellowship hall
- Apr 9** Maundy Thursday, 6:30 PM,
youth room
- Apr 10** Good Friday Vigil, 7 AM to 7 PM,
chapel
- Apr 10** Musical Meditation w/ Andrew & Gail Jennings, 12:15 PM in
sanctuary, violin, organ/piano
- Apr 10** Good Friday service 1:00 PM,
sanctuary
- Apr 10** Good Friday service 7:00 PM,
sanctuary
- Apr 12** 6:45 AM Easter Sunrise Service,
cemetery
9:30 AM Coffee Connection before
service
10:00 AM Easter Worship
(NO 8:30 service)



Musical Meditation with Andrew & Gail Jennings violin, organ/piano

Good Friday - April 10

12:15 pm (prior to 1:00 pm Good Friday Service) In the Sanctuary
Music by Bach, Gounod, Faure, Ravel, Lauridsen, & Williams

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!!!

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING ON MARCH 15

The Bethlehem Congregation is encouraged to attend a special meeting with the Facilities Ministry Team to discuss building mortar repair. Meeting will be after the 10:00 am worship in the fellowship hall. Please make every effort to attend this important meeting.



WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM UPDATE

The Worship Ministry Team continues to meet regularly. A sub group of our team has evolved for the purpose of developing creative ideas to support our pastors. Our theme for Lent 2020 is "Lent 2020: A Journey with Jesus". We will begin our Journey with Jesus in the wilderness (Matt. 4 vs. 1-11). Members of our team volunteered to assist our pastors creatively develop selected passages from the bible for each Sunday. Plans for Holy Week and Easter will be detailed in the April Visitor and our weekly refrigerator page. The Worship Team is also considering the acquisition of new headsets in the sanctuary for the hearing impaired. The previous headsets are obsolete and therefore not used. The team is exploring ways to fund this \$1800.00 expense.

Our team appreciates all those who have volunteered to serve as lay liturgists. We also welcome your suggestions and all feedback regarding our efforts.

~ Harriette Ehnis



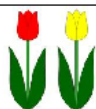
The Leadership Council has set the morning of Saturday March 28, from 8:30 AM - 12:00 pm in the fellowship hall, as a time to gather to continue discussions resulting from last year's Congregational Survey. Members of Ministry Teams have extracted what they can to inform their missions and Council has reviewed the Teams' feedback.

As we move into Spring, Council will refine and focus our efforts to best meet the mission to which we feel collectively called.

2020 Easter Gift Order Form

Deadline
for orders:
**Sunday
March 22**

Make checks payable to
Bethlehem Church
(write "Easter donation" in memo)



FLOWER OR DONATION	# OF PLANTS	\$ AMOUNT
Easter Lily (8" two stems) \$20.00		
Hyacinth \$10.00		
Tulip \$10.00		
Daffodil \$10.00		
Donation to cemetery memorial garden upgrade		
Memorial Fund of your choice: _____		
TOTAL DOLLARS ENCLOSED _____		

In memory of ☐ In honor of ☐

(please print clearly)

From: _____

Your name and phone number/email (please print clearly) _____

Any money left over after flower and delivery charges are paid
will be placed in the General Fund

BUCC OUTREACH MINISTRY MARCH 2020

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteer to prepare and serve dinner for Alpha House residents 2-4 times per year. The next opportunity will be in June. Donations of the following are currently being sought:

- 64-66 qt clear plastic storage bins for organizational purposes
- NEW air mattresses or bed-in-a-box sets (twin or queen size)

ALPHA HOUSE

Fresh produce collections will take place on the third Sundays in March and April during both church services.

Volunteer to prepare dinner at the Community Kitchen on the first Sunday of each month and/or at the warehouse on the third Saturday in April.

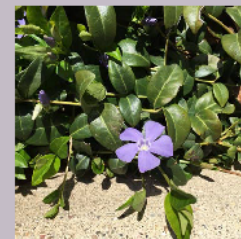
FOOD GATHERERS

Volunteer at PNC to prepare the afterschool snack on the fourth Tuesday each month during the school year, or help with produce distribution each Friday morning.

PEACE NEIGHBORHOOD CENTER

*"Though I do not believe
that a plant will spring up
where no seed has been,
I have great faith in a
seed...Convince me that
you have a seed there,
and I am prepared to
expect wonders."*

Henry David Thoreau



BETHLEHEM GIVES...

During this current fiscal year the Outreach Ministry Team (OMT) selected three area partner agencies to support financially. Alpha House at Interfaith Hospitality Network, Food Gatherers, and Peace Neighborhood Center will each receive \$2,500 from the Outreach budget and designated donations. These organizations assist individuals and families in Ann Arbor and the surrounding area with safety net services including housing, food and meals, children's programs, and much more. Members of Bethlehem's congregation all have an opportunity to actively participate in the good work of these organizations by volunteering with them at their sites! Interested in being notified of volunteer opportunities? We are working on setting up SignUpGenius email lists and/or links for all of our current volunteer programs. The Community Kitchen sign up will be ready for June. Stay tuned for more information or check our webpage for updates.

<https://bethlehem-ucc.org/outreach/>

Don't forget-you can designate special donations directly to Outreach. These contributions help Bethlehem's OMT provide additional financial support to even more area organizations and church mission projects. It's a great way to honor or memorialize someone too.

OUTREACH ENCOURAGES SUPPORT OF ALL OF BETHLEHEM'S MISSION PROJECTS...

This year Outreach Ministry is helping support and promote the Mission projects of Bethlehem's youth and young adults.

- Habitat for Humanity of Genesee County Lenten "Calendar of Giving"
- Cake Auction fundraiser for the summer mission trip (exact details still in the works)
- Fisher House Fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner
- ...and much more

Looking ahead -

- Bethlehem will be hosting the Ann Arbor CROP Walk in the fall of 2020

1



COMMUNION WORSHIP SCHEDULE CHANGE

Please make a note that for April, the communion worship normally held on the first Sunday of the month will be moved to Easter Sunday, April 12.

OUR FOOD BARREL IS HUNGRY



Our Food Gatherers barrel for nonperishables is located in the library. Please remember to gather extras each time you shop. Items most in need are soup, canned meat or vegetables, pasta, beans, rice, cereal, granola bars, peanut butter, jelly, baby food, formula, diapers, and toiletries.



TICKET SALE BEGINS MARCH 15

APRIL

26



**Fundraiser for Fisher House Michigan
Support for
Military & Veterans' Families**

KNIGHT'S STEAKHOUSE

2324 Dexter Road Ann Arbor

Fundraiser Spaghetti Dinner

Menu: Spaghetti, Meatballs, Rolls, Salad, Cookies

Sponsored by: Knight's Steakhouse, Stevie D & the Wannabes,
Bethlehem United Church of Christ



First Seating: 2-4:00pm
Second Seating: 4:30-6:30pm
(Last Seating 6:15pm)

\$25 ADULT (CASH BAR)
\$10 CHILDREN (UNDER AGE 11)

Tickets available at:
Bethlehem United Church of Christ
423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor 48104
734-665-6149

Checks made payable to:
Bethlehem United
Church of Christ
(Fisher House on Memo Line)

Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received in February, 2020

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND
Carole Katz Memorial

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND
Sandy Dotson Memorial

RADIO FUND
John Schneider Memorial

RADIO SPONSORSHIP
March 8 – In memory of Bertha Nachtigal Harlley
by Bob & Jamie Dylenski
March 15—In Memory of Laura Ann Jaworowski, Wilma
Wahl, and Ron Jaworowski by Sue Canfield

Gifts listed were received through February 29, 2020

Auxiliary/Mothers' Study would like to invite everyone to their meeting at 1:00 pm on March 18 in the Gallery. Joyce Deren of the Washtenaw Refugee Welcome (WRW) will be giving an overview of their program and what they do. Please join us for a great gathering.

2020 Bethlehem Church Tigers Bus Outing

The tradition continues! We have reserved a block of excellent seats at Comerica Park for the Sunday, August 2, 2020 game against the Kansas City Royals. Scheduled game time is 1:10 p.m. We plan to depart from the Church following 10:00 a.m. worship and return to the Church right after the game. Your \$50 ticket gets you a ride to and from Comerica Park in a luxury coach, your game ticket, lunch and beverages aboard the bus on the way to the game, other special items, and great fellowship. Contact Brian Paton to make your reservation, 734.635.9204, or bapaton@hotmail.com. First come, first served; your payment reserves your seat. Please join us!

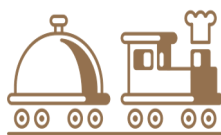


YOUTH GROUP MEAL TRAIN

If you're able to support the Youth Group by preparing or ordering a dinner, please sign up using this link:

mealtrain.com/k7d4mr

then join us for dinner so we can chat and get to know you better!



From Your President's Desk



Blessed are the pie bakers! I hope you were in attendance at the Valentine's Day-themed worship service Pastor Lily led on February 16 which included among other things, an opportunity to sign Valentine Day cards to those in our community unable to attend worship. I popped up just prior to the benediction and called Pastor John Kennedy forward to congratulate him on five years' service as our Pastor, noting he had arrived in the blizzard of '15. To mark this anniversary, I was urged (and it didn't take much convincing!) it was time to add his portrait to the line of Pastors lining the hallway outside the church office. Thanks to Jeff Wortman for making it happen: it's a very good photo of Pastor John.

But about that pie: since John has let it be known he would rather eat pie than cake and that peach pie is his favorite, there were pies aplenty in Fellowship Hall following worship and I presented him with a piece. Thanks to all who brought pies!

Always a busy congregation, we then listened to Dr. Fritz Port's presentation "Easy Water for Everyone" describing the project to bring locally maintainable (without power!) water purification systems to Ghana and beyond. I look forward to the youth's enthusiasm collecting for this important work.

My story for the month: having nothing better to do in retirement, Karen and I have spent a great deal of time reconciling and amplifying various Bethlehem Cemetery records. Periodically, this can involve a field trip to go to the cemetery and investigate. Last October (I've been meaning to tell you this a while!) we were walking the property and discovered that beyond the normal Veterans' and Memorial Day decorations (which were gone by that time), there are those who decorate graves for Halloween! It seemed a bit odd, trying to make a cemetery spooky with fake graves, spider webs, plastic jack-o'-lanterns, etc. But it makes sense: perhaps the dear departed, as many, enjoyed the Halloween holiday or perhaps the family always decorated the yard. Why not continue the custom? I learned something new that day and thought I'd share it, in case you haven't been in a cemetery before Halloween recently!

Calling all those with internet access: if you have a few moments, we'd appreciate your taking some time to drill down on BUCC's website: <https://bethlehem-ucc.org/> for two purposes:

- Proof-read pages about whose content you are familiar. Do they need updates?
- Give everything (there's quite a bit!) a once-over.
 - What's missing (always hard to "see!")?
 - What's in the wrong place?
 - What's out of date?

Thanks for your help!

2020 Lenten Service Projects

This year's project is two-fold and will benefit two organizations:

1. **Easy Water for Everyone:** *"We believe that every human being deserves lasting access to safe water and sanitation — spending more time learning, growing, working, and thriving, instead of walking for water and fighting off illness."*

· The Education Ministry Team (EMT) is leading this effort. BUCC member Dr. Fritz Port is on the Board of Directors.

· Bethlehem's children and youth will collect your loose change during Sunday services in Lent. EMT will sell St. Patrick's Day cookies on Sunday, March 15. Fellowship MT will collect donations at the Palm Sunday Brunch.

· Youth Group: Come to board game night on 3/12 (any donations will go to the project).

· Optional donations will be collected during Gentle Yoga in Lent

· Goal: Raise \$3,200 to fully fund the installation of one water filtration system and maintain it for five years. As of Saturday, 2/29/2020, we have raised \$881 toward our goal.

2. **Habitat for Humanity of Genesee County.** For the last several years, Bethlehem's annual summer mission trip has involved service with Habitat of Genesee County in Flint. This year, our summer service trip will take place with a UCC church in Cincinnati, OH, but we are continuing to support Habitat of Genesee County in this way.

· Folks who have participated in the Habitat trips are leading the way on this effort! · Sign up for a Lent Build 2020 packet with Lily. You'll receive a cardboard Habitat house piggy bank, and the calendar with 40 days of devotional material. The calendar is also printed in this bulletin.

· Participate as you choose. You may follow the donation prompts for each day during Lent, or make a one time donation. On Easter Sunday, bring your "house" to Bethlehem so we can build our Bethlehem Builds village!

· Goals: Raise \$1,000 and have 75 participating Bethlehem members.

Any level of participation is appreciated! We'll celebrate our progress on both projects during Sunday services.

Thank you in advance for contributing to this shared Lenten spiritual practice at Bethlehem. Whatever your Lenten practices involve, we wish you a meaningful and reflective Lenten season.



Faith Build 2020

40 Days of PRAYER & SERVICE

Put a check or a sticker in the box after completing each task	For each task you check off, add \$1 to the Habitat House Bank	For each task not checked, add \$2 to the Habitat House Bank	1 (1st Wednesday 2/26) Thank God for your home	2 Pay a compliment to a stranger	3 Pray before each meal	4 Visit a neighbor
5 Go to church or read your bible	6 Turn off the radio and listen to God for 2 minutes	7 Sit in nature for 5 minutes	8 Thank God for the friendships you have	9 Give out some chocolate	10 Thank God for your access to fresh food	11 Double your usual tip amount
12 Go to church or read your bible	13 Do another person's chore	14 Send an email or thanks to the church	15 Call a parent or sibling	16 Dance	17 Thank God for your hair	18 Mail a card to someone
19 Go to church or read your bible	20 Thank God for the abundance in your pantry	21 Pick up some litter	22 Sing	23 (First day of Spring) Plant flowers or pull some weeds	24 Thank God for the moon and the stars	25 Watch a funny movie with someone you love
26 Give Lily a hug	27 Call an old friend	28 Thank God for all the smiles that you see	29 Give an animal some extra loving	30 Thank God for all the sun and the rain	31 Ask someone how they are and LISTEN to their answer	32 Thank God for all the art you experience
33 (1st Sunday) Go to church or read your bible	34 Thank God for the running water in your home	35 Thank God for your church family	36 Let someone go ahead of you in line	37 (Passover begins) Post a bible verse on social media	38 (Good Friday) Pray for someone you don't get along with	39 Thank God for sending Jesus to save you
40 (Easter Sunday) Go to church or read your bible	Count your blessings and help Genesee County Habitat for Humanity raise money to help local families build strength, stability, self-reliance, and shelter. www.geneseehabitat.org					
						101 Burton St, Flint, MI 48503



HAPPENINGS




Shawl Ministry
Prayer Shawl Ministry
Join us Wednesdays
March 25
April 1, 8, 22, & 29
from 1 - 3 pm
in the Lounge



Gentle Yoga at Bethlehem
All are invited to join Gentle Yoga. Tuesdays March 10, 17 & 24 and April 7, 14, 21, & 28 at 5:30 pm in the Library. **No Yoga on March 31.**



board game night
games & fun
March 12
6:30-8:30
hosted by bethlehem youth group
www.bethlehem-youth.org




Sunday, April 5
Food Gatherers Volunteer Day
At Delonis Center
12 - 2:30 pm Sign up near the office



HOLY ROLLERS PRETZELS
Saturday, March 21
Saturday, April 18
Rolling at 8 am, sales from 11 am - 1 pm
(Call 734-665-6149 to preorder)

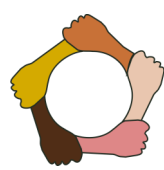



Bethlehem Veterans' Monthly Breakfast
Friday, April 3, 8:30 am
Classic Cup Café, Jackson Rd.
Questions? Contact Tom Ziesemer




Gentle Yoga at Bethlehem with Lily
Tuesdays @ 5:30 pm in the Library
March 10, 17 & 24
April 7, 14, 21 & 28

Bethlehem Prayer Circle
March 19 and April 2 & 16
11:30 am - 12:15 pm
Join us in the Schmale Lounge as we lift up prayers and share a spiritual exercise



OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES
After-School Program
Tuesdays, 2:45-4:45 p.m.



Sign up near the office to join us as we serve elementary school children nutritious snacks before they go to their tutoring program. Please consider volunteering.

Food Distribution Program
Fridays, 9:00 am-12:00 pm

Volunteers needed to help sort and distribute fresh produce, provided by Food Gatherers, to families eligible to take part in this program. No sign up necessary...just come when you can!



Food Gatherers Volunteer Day
All Bethlehem members are invited to join the Youth Group for our upcoming Food Gatherers Volunteer Day on Saturday, April 18 from 2 - 4 PM. Food Gatherers is located on Carry Way (off Dhu Varren Road). Looking forward to seeing you there!

HOW TO BE PREPARED FOR CORONAVIRUS
Keeping yourself and your family safe around respiratory illnesses



WASH YOUR HANDS

It's important. Most of us don't do it enough or aren't good at it. Scrub for 20 seconds. If you can't wash, use a hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol.



ALWAYS BE READY

Risk of exposure remains low. But, start thinking about general, daily supplies - water and food staples or medications, for example. Visit www.ready.gov for suggestions.



STAY HOME IF YOU'RE SICK

If you need medical care and think you may have been exposed to coronavirus, call your medical provider for instructions before going in.



MASKS

Masks are not a good prevention tool for healthy people. If you are sick, masks can help prevent the spread of germs. Health care workers or others caring for sick people should wear appropriately fitted masks (such as N95 respirators).



KEEP GERMS OUT OF THE AIR

Cough or sneeze into your elbow, not your hands. Or, use a tissue and throw it away.



KEEP RISK IN PERSPECTIVE

Flu is actively circulating in Washtenaw County. Novel coronavirus is not. Practice good prevention (handwashing, staying home if sick, etc.). Get a flu shot if you haven't.



SOCIAL DISTANCING

Someone coughing? Move away - 6 feet or more.



DISINFECT SURFACES

Clean frequently-touched surfaces at home. Wash your hands after visiting public spaces.



RELIABLE INFORMATION

Make sure you're getting accurate information. Bookmark www.washtenaw.org/health and follow the Washtenaw County Health Department on social media.

[f](https://www.facebook.com/wcpublichealth) [i](https://www.instagram.com/wcpublichealth) [@wcpublichealth](https://www.twitter.com/wcpublichealth)



Spiritual Growth and Development

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel, Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

~ FEBRUARY HIGHLIGHTS ~

THANK
you
SO
MUCH

Thanks to Alton's family for bringing delicious breakfast for dinner on February 20.

February Board Game Night

We finally put the finishing touches on the Church World Service school and hygiene kits! Thanks to your generosity, we assembled 35 Hygiene Kits and 38 School Kits. Our friends from St. Paul UUC in Saline will deliver the kits in the coming weeks.



On Sunday, February 16, Bethlehem member Dr. Fritz Port gave a presentation on the organization *Easy Water for Everyone*, our Lenten service project. More information on page 9.

Scott Rubick from **Delonis Center** talked about the Community Kitchen before worship on February 9. Scott expressed thanks to Bethlehem for our support of the Community Kitchen over the years.



Our February **Spiritual Growth and Development** class on Spirituality and Song met several



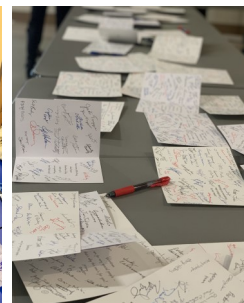
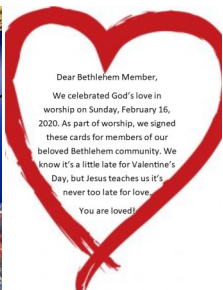
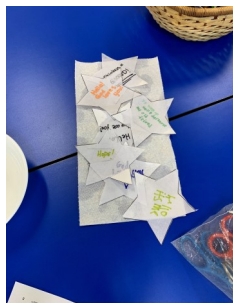
times. On February 7, we shared a potluck dinner and attended a concert by Carrie Newcomer at the Ark



Thanks to everyone who joined in the fun during our **Food Gatherers Volunteer Day** on February 15.

All are invited to join our next volunteer day on Saturday, April 18.

Whenever two or more of you are gathered in His name...there is love



Valentine's Worship

We had a fun worship service on Sunday, February 16. thanks to Abby, Allan, & Carrie, Worship Ministry Team, Member Care, Education Ministry Team, Sound Team, and Gail, David and the Choir who all helped make the service meaningful. The cards you signed for Bethlehem members have been received and are deeply appreciated.

Spiritual Growth and Development

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel - Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

~ ~ YOUTH GROUP + LOOKING FORWARD ~ ~

Opportunities in Lent

- **Lent Devotionals** - We distributed the first 50. We will receive our next order of the 2020 Len Devotionals from the *stillspeaking writers' group* of the UCC by March 11.



- **Bethlehem Builds—Lent Giving** *Easy Water for Everyone*. Bring your coins! Bethlehem's children and youth will collect coins during Sunday services again this Lent.
- **Faith Build 2020**

Sign up for 40 Days of Prayer and Service (this is a devotional and giving opportunity in one).



Lent Bible Study - Roundtable Pulpit

Join Pastor Lily and Pastor John for a weekly Bible study during Lent. We'll gather for a brown bag lunch on Tuesdays of Lent (March 10, 17, 24, 31 & April 7 from 12:00 - 1:30 pm in the lounge. Each Tuesday we will reflect on the scripture for the upcoming Sunday. Sign up sheet on the bulletin board.



Calling all Kids and Youth!

On Sundays in Lent, we'll need your help to collect coins for *Easy Water for Everyone* during the opening hymn.

Palm Sunday Potluck Brunch



April 5
following the
10:00 am Worship

Sign up sheet located on the
bulletin board by the Church Office
for Food donations for the Brunch

All proceeds will go to the
SCS Lenten Project
Easy Water for Everyone



Save the date-Sunday, April 5th for our Palm Sunday Brunch. Bring your favorite egg casserole, fruit or baked goods for everyone to enjoy. Mac & cheese or other side dishes will also be appreciated. The sign-up sheet is on the bulletin board outside the church office. It's always fun to sample a great variety of delicious food.

We ask that the casseroles be prebaked - we'll keep them warm in the ovens. Join us for a time of good food, fun and fellowship. Proceeds will go to the church Lenten Project - *Easy Water For Everyone*.

St. Patrick's Day Cookie Sale

On Sunday, March 15, Bethlehem's children and youth will decorate St. Patrick's Day Cookies to sell after worship.

Mark your calendars! Proceeds will go to *Easy Water for Everyone* Lent fundraiser!



YOUTH GROUP & CONFIRMATION

Please mark your calendars for the upcoming youth group and confirmation events:

- ◆ Sun., 3/8. Confirmation 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Th., 3/12. Youth Group Board Game Night, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Th., 3/19. Confirmation, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sun., 3/22. Confirmation, 11:30-1:30pm
- ◆ Th., 3/26. Youth Group, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Th., 4/2. NO Confirmation - Spring Break
- ◆ Th., 4/9. Confirmation + Youth: Maundy Thursday Service, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sun., 4/12. NO Confirmation - Happy Easter.
- ◆ Th., 4/16. Confirmation, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sat., 4/18. Food Gatherers Volunteer Day, 2:00-4:00pm
- ◆ Th., 4/23. Youth Group, 6:30-8:30
- ◆ Sun., 4/26. Confirmation, 11:30-1:30pm.
- ◆ Th., 4/30. Youth Group, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sun., 5/3. Confirmation + Youth: Cake Auction, Confirmation meet until 1:30pm
- ◆ Th., 5/7. Confirmation, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sun., 5/10. Confirmation, 11:30-1:30pm
- ◆ Th. 5/14. Youth Group Board Game Night, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Th., 5/21. Confirmation, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sun., 5/24. Confirmation Final Class, 11:30-1:30pm
- ◆ Th., 5/28. Youth Group, 6:30-8:30pm
- ◆ Sun., 5/31. Confirmation Service

Happy 5th Anniversary Pastor John

Welcome New Members



Get your Raffle Tickets Here



Emily Potter and
Nadia Berenjian



First Sunday in Lent



When life gives you rocks....

...make Stone Soup!



Bethlehem's children and youth prepared a delicious Stone Soup Lunch on February 23. Thanks to all who donated veggies, beans, broth, etc. for the soup and to members of the Education Ministry Team.

Bethlehem's 2020 Summer Mission Trip - Everyone's Invited

- **Who:** You! The guest house accommodates 14 people and we're hoping to fill as many spots as possible! Ages HS to adult are definitely welcome (and younger a possibility). Please let us know if you have any questions.
- **What:** Supporting their Summer Youth Program by working with children, preparing meals, and doing various projects around the church and in the neighborhood. We'll stay in an on-site guest house (no camping this year!).
- **When:** Sunday, June 21 - Friday, June 26
- **Where:** Washington UCC - Cincinnati, OH.
- **Why:** Service is an important way of putting our faith into action! This is an amazing opportunity to support another UCC congregation and learn about the wonderful work they are doing in their community! Mission trips always provide lots of opportunities for fellowship and relationship building with other Bethlehem members. And did we mention: NO camping this year!
- **How:** Let Lily know if you're interested in joining this summer's service trip
- **Habitat T-Shirt Quilt Raffle Fundraiser:** It's not too late to get your raffle tickets for the beautiful quilt made by Vicki Hoxie's Aunt Lucy from Maple Grove, Minnesota. The quilt was made using t-shirts from past Bethlehem Habitat mission trips! In addition to the quilt, we'll be raffling smaller items including 2019 & 2018 Habitat trip t-shirts and some fun tools. Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The raffle will take place Sunday, March 15.



FROM THE BETHLEHEM CEMETERY BOARD

Thank you to everyone for your generous donations of cash and stock. Your gifts will enable us to continue upgrading the cemetery grounds and facilities. They are an important source of revenue for Bethlehem Cemetery.

A gentle reminder that all seasonal decorations are to be removed from grave sites prior to April 1. Wreaths may be put in the trash cans or left at the cemetery building for disposal. Anything remaining will be thrown in the trash.

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.



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.



FEBRUARY 2020	Year to Date	YTD Target	2019/2020 Budget
Offerings and Income	TBD	\$319,604	\$479,406
Expenses	TBD	\$354,757	\$532,136
Net	TBD	(\$35,153)	(\$52,730)



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 Sloten	