



The Visitor

May 2020

Bethlehem United Church of Christ



Special Congregational Meeting
April 26

A Congregation apart...
...but in this together



Deadline for the
June Visitor is
Monday, June 1



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



WORSHIP MINISTRY TEAM UPDATE

by Harriette Ehnis

The WMT has been meeting weekly over the past two months. We center our meetings on planning for Sunday morning worship services. It is our intent to bring a meaningful, vibrant worship service to our Bethlehem family and our broader community. In so doing, we continue to seek lay liturgists for each service. We value the many voices of Bethlehem and we have received positive feedback regarding this approach. Many of our members, who served in this capacity in the past have “stepped up” to serve using audio/video techniques. Additional volunteers have come forward to serve in this role. Our team is truly grateful to those who are helping us out. It is a real challenge due to the need to pre-record the lay liturgist role. Our team recognizes the amount of time our staff is dedicating to plan and execute our Sunday service. We can’t thank Pastor John, Pastor Lily, David Hahn, and Gail Jennings enough for their efforts. They are energized and they are keeping the spirit of Bethlehem alive. COVID-19 has made the WMT stop and think about our future worship services and we have determined it necessary to create a visual editor position on a contractual basis. This person will work with our staff, videoing and editing the content for our services. This position was posted for one week and we received many applications. Two applicants were interviewed by a subgroup of our team this contractual position will report to our Director of Music, David Hahn. Our team is pleased to announce that BUCC has purchased 6 headsets for the hearing impaired. These will be used when we return to worship in the sanctuary. Memorials and Gifts funded the \$1,800.00 expense. Details related to their use will be forthcoming. Please know that our team is energized, looking forward to the day when we can again gather together in our beautiful sanctuary. We value your input and comments as we continue to work.

Making Masks



Thank you to the Bethlehem members who are sewing masks! We’ve learned that St. Joe in Ann Arbor is accepting home-sewn masks. They prefer the Deaconess Pattern, which you can find below. Please let Pastor Lily know if you are making masks. Bethlehem members are making kits, others are willing to help deliver masks. Here are masks made by Bethlehem member Angie Lewis.

How to make a Face Mask

What you will need

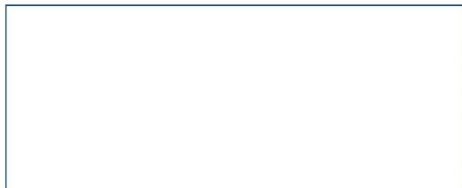
- Cotton fabric, a pretty print is best.
- Rope Elastic, beading cord elastic will work (you may also use 1/8" flat elastic)
- Cut the elastic 7" long and tie a knot at each end (DO NOT knot the ends of the flat)

You can make two sizes: Adult or Child

1. Put right sides of cotton fabric together
 - o Cut 9x6 (Adult) or 7.5 x 5 (Child)
2. Starting at the center of the bottom edge, sew to the first corner, stop. Sew the elastic with the edge out into the corner. A few stitches forward and back will hold this.
3. Sew to the next corner, stop, and bring the other end of the same elastic to the corner and sew a few stitches forward and back.
4. Now sew across that top of the mask to the next corner. Again put an elastic with the edge out.
5. Sew to the next corner and sew in the other end of the same elastic.
6. Sew across the bottom leaving about 1.5" to 2" open. Stop, cut the thread. Turn inside out.
7. Pin 3 tucks on each side of the mask. Make sure the tucks are the same direction
8. Sew around the edge of the mask twice.

It is so easy to make this.

Be sure any fabric design is placed horizontally.



How to Make an Adult Mask with Ties

Supplies for 1 mask:

- One (1) 8x14 inch piece of cotton fabric
- Two (2) 1.5 x34 inch strips
- Thread & sewing machine

Prepare the mask:

On 8/14 inch piece, right sides together, sew 1/4 inch seam, creating tube.

Turn right sides out, press seam and fabric.

Make 3 pleats, approx. 1 inch each in size, using steam or pins to hold. Mask will be approx. 3-3.5 inches in width.

Sew 1/4 inch seam on each side of mask, securing pleats.

Trim seam allowance.



Prepare the ties:

Fold in half and press (3/4 inch). Open tie back up.

Fold each edge in to meet middle (3/8 inch/0.375 inch) and press.

Fold in half again, securing raw edges inside and press. Each tie will be approx. 3/8 inch in width.

Assembly:

Align center of tie with side of mask, open tie so edge of mask fits snugly inside. Pin.

Sew tie to mask, seam will be very short, get as close as able while still catching all fabric. You are just attaching the mask to the tie at this point, not sewing the whole tie yet.

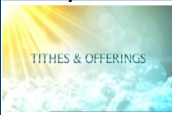
Repeat for other tie and other side of mask.

Sew down edges of tie, securing raw edges inside. Seam is very short. You will stitch over where mask is already attached. This is good because it helps reinforce.

Repeat for other tie and other side of mask.

Clip any stray fabric and enjoy ☺

APRIL 2020	Year to Date	YTD Target	2019/2020 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$411,295	\$439,456	\$479,406
Expenses	\$463,959	\$487,791	\$532,136
Net	(\$52,663)	(\$48,336)	(\$52,730)



Please Help Us to Help Others

During this unprecedented time we are all challenged in many ways. While we have experienced some decline in offerings, we are so very grateful for the continued giving and the increased use of our online giving platform. Yet, the needs of our staff and their families, outreach to the community, and maintaining building operations remain priorities. I am especially appealing to those of us who still have work and/or other means. I am asking you to consider, not only to keep giving, but to give more than normal in order to offset for those who may be out of work or greatly impacted by COVID-19.

We have been rearranging staff duties to maintain the needed daily operations but have also developed creative ways to keep both our staff working and performing new and more appropriate duties that meet the present needs that we are all experiencing. We have focused heavily on spiritual enrichment offerings via ZOOM which includes: live-stream of Sunday Worship on Facebook, Tuesdays Roundtable Pulpit with Pastor Lily and myself, Café/Happy Hour on Wednesdays, Virtual Connect with Ms. Kelsey and Pastor Lily for our kids and youth on Sundays, and BUCCuleles, our ukulele band which encompasses a multi-generational community of Bethlehem members, but also individuals from outside our community just to name a few. We have also focused on outreach within our community to ascertain whether anything is needed or if care is being provided by family, neighbors, etc.

Please help us maintain the mission here at Bethlehem by giving as generously as you are able to our online giving by clicking [here](#) or by mailing in your donations to the church office.

God bless you for your generosity,

Pastor John

BUCC Outreach Ministry May 2020

submitted by Laura Seyfried, OMT leader



Outreach still looks a lot different these days. Currently, agencies in our area are still working as “essential” service providers. However, they have adopted temporary procedures in the way they deliver programming to the families and individuals they assist. Many agencies are continuing to offer food, shelter, financial, technical, educational and emotional support but with minimal staff and volunteers. And this is just the beginning. Caseloads, like the virus itself, have increased exponentially. Budgets are being strained, and its likely to get more challenging before it gets better.

We need to help because we can. There is great need in our community and world-wide, not just for food and temporary shelter, but also for mental health services, blood donations, personal protective equipment, and even toilet paper. These needs are not necessarily new but they have definitely increased during the time of COVID-19. Please consider an Outreach Ministry donation to support our local agencies who provide these services. You can donate by check or online at the [BUCC website](#).

We need to help because we are called to do so. The people who serve and are served need our support. As “essential” service workers are still showing up each day, the physical and emotional strain is evident. Messaging and instruction from local, state and federal government has become a little less frequent and more consistent. Programming and operations have stabilized for the time being. We can ease this burden on those to work to help others in need to ensure that the help will continue to be available for those who are suffering.

We need to help today in the most practical way possible. Donate dollars. This will allow our partner organizations and others to increase their capacity to help those in need by using our gifts to purchase more food and supplies, open more beds for people needing safety and shelter, create or expand programming that addresses the current needs of those recently unemployed, offer tools to staff that allow them to work safely and responsibly, and much more. Bethlehem now has its own “COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund” set up to offer continued, long-term support to the local organizations listed below. The official kick-off will happen in June but the option is already available on the BUCC website’s donation page.

[Alpha House Interfaith Hospitality Network](#)

[Food Gatherers](#) (Community Kitchen at Delonis Center and the Warehouse)

[Groundcover News](#)

[Peace Neighborhood Center](#)

Additional volunteer and giving opportunities continue: Lenten mission projects for Habitat for Humanity of Genesee County and Easy Water for Everyone; Groundcover’s collection of used and usable smart phones, tablets and laptop computers; meal donations (possibly meal prep and serving) at Alpha House and the Community Kitchen; CROP Walk planning; and more. Stay tuned for more information on how you can help in future weekly church emails and in articles in the Visitor.

Thank you for considering these requests. Stay safe and be well.

The Outreach Ministry Team

HAPPENINGS

EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

The Bethlehem 2020 Scholarship Application is available now on our website. Deadline for filing is June 14.

Members of Bethlehem are eligible for educational scholarships. These are open to any qualified member attending full-time at an approved, accredited university, college, or seminary (accredited) at the undergraduate or graduate level.

Applications may be obtained by emailing: parishadministrator@Bethlehem-ucc.org. They can also be downloaded from the website: bethlehem-ucc.org.



CELEBRATE
CLASS
2020

Celebrating Graduates

Bethlehem wants to do all we can to celebrate graduates this year! Please email Pastor Lily (Lily@bethlehem-ucc.org) if there's a high school or college, undergrad or advanced degree graduate in your life.

Please include:

- ◆ Graduate's name
- ◆ School
- ◆ Degree is applicable
- ◆ Email and phone number for both you and the graduate

COVENANT ASSOCIATION

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

The Rev. Phil Hart, Transitional Conference Minister

NOTICE OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL FOR ORDINATION

Greetings!

This is the OFFICIAL NOTICE OF AN ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCIL FOR THE EXAMINATION of Lily Tinker Fortel for Ordination in the United Church of Christ, pending an approved call. The Ecclesiastical Council has been called for Thursday, June 4, 2020, via Zoom at 7:00 p.m.

Topic: Lily Tinker Fortel Ecclesiastical Council

Time: Jun 4, 2020 07:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89987330061?](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89987330061?pwd=aEpVaEZCVzVWVFJwaEE0L1BvOG9lUT09)

[pwd=aEpVaEZCVzVWVFJwaEE0L1BvOG9lUT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89987330061?pwd=aEpVaEZCVzVWVFJwaEE0L1BvOG9lUT09)

Meeting ID: 899 8733 0061

Password: 533033

Dial by your location

+1 646 558 8656 US (New York)

Meeting ID: 899 8733 0061

Lily Tinker Fortel is a Member in Discernment of the Covenant Association and a member of Bethlehem UCC, Ann Arbor. She received a Master of Divinity from Union Theological Seminary.

The Association will receive the recommendations of the Church and Ministry Committee, hear the candidate's presentation and further examine the candidate. The Association will vote on whether or not to authorize ordination, pending an approved call.

The Covenant Association Bylaws state that a quorum shall consist of: A quorum for all Association meetings (including Ecclesiastical Council Meetings) shall be 20% of local churches and 10% of authorized ministers.

All churches in the Covenant Association have the responsibility of sending delegates to the Ecclesiastical Council of Lily Tinker Fortel. A copy of her ordination paper is available by email request: lisa@michucc.org.

All authorized Association Clergy and Churches are encouraged to participate in this event.

Blessings and Joy,

Marian Bryant, Registrar, Covenant Association

mbbryant.lancen@gmail.com

FROM THE BETHLEHEM CEMETERY BOARD

If you would like to make a monetary donation to the cemetery tree and shrub fund, to enhance common areas, you may do so [online](#) or by mailing a check to the church office with the notation "cemetery tree/shrub fund" in the memo. Please have donations submitted by May 20.



OUTREACH OPPORTUNITIES

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 signup necessary...just come when you can!

From Your President's Desk



Special Congregational Meeting April 26

The motion passed for our congregation to use up to a maximum of \$60,000 of undesignated investment funds to address mortar repairs recommended by historic stone building mortar repair company Grunwell-Cashero. These needs were identified by our roofing company, Butcher and Butcher. Water leaking through crumbling mortar was damaging interior walls. This special Congregational Zoom meeting was attended by five or six dozen members! We expect work to begin early this month.

CARES Act Loan

Leadership Council held a special meeting in early April to discuss a recommendation by the Finance Ministry Team that Bethlehem seek a loan in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security (CARES) Act through the Bank of Ann Arbor. Leadership Council authorized applying for the loan, which was for two and a half times our monthly payroll and benefits: over \$43,000 at 1% interest. The loan is supposed to be forgiven if we use it to cover only payroll and benefits and don't lay anyone off.

Search for a short-term part-time techie to assist production of on-line services

As worship has continued on-line during the pandemic, the need for help in its weekly production has been increasingly evident. Many thanks to all those who have pitched in during this time to make it happen: David Hahn, Gail & Andy Jennings, Pastor John, Pastor Lily, Steve, Jennifer & Edgar Vasquez, Gary Rogers, Kurt Schmerberg, and Jim Stadel. I'm certain I've left many off the list and apologize: it takes a congregation to worship!

The Worship Ministry Team (WMT) put out a call for applicants to stitch together the pieces of our on-line worship services, for the duration of the church closure. We got scores of applicants from as far away as Russia but found a well-qualified candidate studying Audio and Video editing at the University of Michigan. Sam Smith has been hired as a week-to-week contractor, paid out of the McKay Congregational Benevolence fund. Longer term, WMT will determine what recommendation to make for staffing production of our 21st century electronic church's worship.

Budget preparation for the Annual Meeting

Under Finance Ministry Team (FMT) leadership, the annual budgeting process has begun. Ministry Teams, Committees, and Administration have submitted budget proposals for the FMT to review and then discuss with Leadership Council (LC) and the submitters on Saturday, May 9. Following that discussion, FMT will further refine the budget, especially in view of the Stewardship Campaign results, and recommend it to LC at its May 28 meeting. The budget, as approved by LC, will be presented at the Annual Congregational Meeting, following worship on Sunday, June 14.

Stewardship Campaign

Thanks to those who served on this year's Stewardship Campaign: Judy Coucouvanis, Della DiPietro, Dan Foster, Thomas Krell and Roy Muir. I hope you've received (or soon will receive) their mailing and that you'll respond generously. Shucks, even if you don't receive it (mail is an iffy thing during this period!) feel free to take it upon yourself to make your own pledge card and send it into the church office.

Rotating Shelter

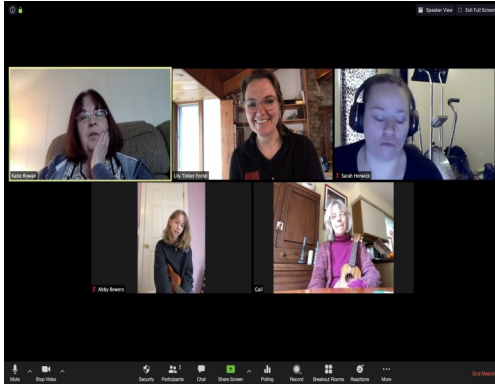
Thus far, only one individual has contacted me about the announcement in last month's *Visitor* regarding the Rotating Shelter program run by The Shelter Association of Washtenaw County in which faith-based organizations open their doors to men experiencing homelessness in Washtenaw County during our harsh winters. Bethlehem used to participate, but as volunteers became fewer, withdrew. If you are interested in volunteering to take a shift to help BUCC recommit to a week next fall/winter, please contact Leadership Council President John Samford: JohnMossSamford@Bethlehem-UCC.org.

Spiritual Growth and Development

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel, Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

~~ APRIL HIGHLIGHTS ~~

BUCculeles making beautiful music

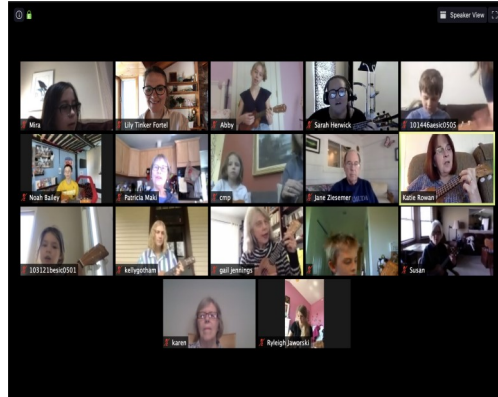


BUCculeles
Planning
team 4/14

BUCculeles
Henry &
Charlotte



BUCculeles
Practice on
4/24



BUCculeles
5/1. Fun &
Fellowship

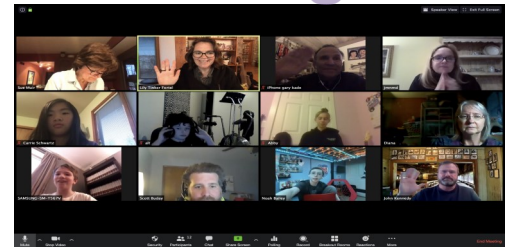
Our Youth meeting the Challenge



Confirmation 4/16



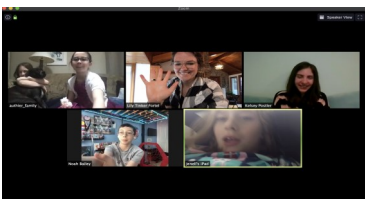
Youth group 4/13



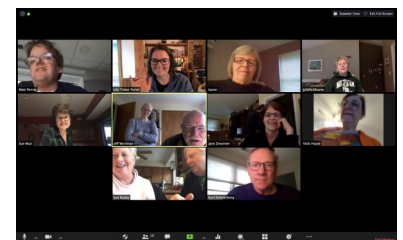
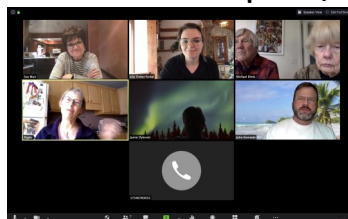
Confirmation 4/30

Fellowship for All

Roundtable Pulpit 4/14



Chat w Kelsey 4/12



ZOOM Café 4/24

Virtual Spiritual Growth & Development Opportunities during the COVID-19 Outbreak

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel - Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

All of the activities below can be accessed using the same Zoom Meeting ID: 501 731 3201

- Zoom on computer or smartphone: <https://zoom.us/j/5017313201> Meeting ID: 501 731 3201. *Note: These Zoom meetings can now be joined directly from your web browser, without having to download the Zoom app.*
- Dial in by phone: 1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago) Meeting ID: 501 731 3201#
- +13126266799,,5017313201# US (Chicago)



Sundays.

- Connect with Kelsey. Sundays from 11:00-11:15.
For Bethlehem kids and youth. Join Ms. Kelsey and Pastor Lily via Zoom following our virtual worship this Sunday.

Tuesdays.

- Roundtable Pulpit. Tuesdays 12:00-1:30.
Pastor John and Pastor Lily will continue to host the roundtable pulpit via Zoom. Join us to explore the scripture reading for the upcoming Sunday.
- Yoga on Zoom. Tuesdays 5:30-6:00pm.
Join us for a very meditative practice via Zoom.

Wednesdays.

- Bethlehem Zoom Cafe/Happy Hour. Wednesdays 5-6pm.
This is an informal community check-in opportunity. Drop in to say hi and see friendly faces. Stay for as long (or short!) as you want.

Thursdays.

- First Thursdays: Prayer Circle. 12:00-12:30. Topic: Creating a sacred space in your home.
Join us for our monthly prayer circle. We'll pray for those on Bethlehem's prayer list, and discuss creating a sacred space in your home.
- Weekly: Youth Group. 6:30-7:30.
For Bethlehem's middle and high school youth.

Meditation

- Mindfulness meditation practices can be powerful and grounding in times such as these. Oprah Winfrey and Deepak Chopra are currently offering a 21-day meditation experience called "Hope in Uncertain Times." Learn more at <https://chopracentermeditation.com/>.

The BUCCuleles!

- We're starting a Bethlehem ukulele band! The **BUCCuleles**, if you will. So get yourself a ukulele or some maracas and contact Pastor Lily (lily@bethlehem-ucc.org) to let her know you'd like to join. Starting this week we'll post a weekly video tutorial and gather once a week via Zoom for practice. When we're able to worship in person together again, we'll bring music to worship! If you want to purchase a ukulele, we have a small number of Kala KA-15S ukuleles from a local music store for a discounted rate of \$45. Please let Lily know if you'd like to purchase one.

Bethlehem COVID-19 Giving

In March, Bethlehem made "emergency" donations using discretionary funds to a couple of organizations with whom we have existing partnerships.

Food Gatherers \$1000 (3/23)

Peace Neighborhood \$1700 (3/19)

In the coming weeks, we'll be launching a congregation-wide campaign - the Bethlehem COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund. Details are forthcoming, but if you feel compelled, you can donate today at <https://bit.ly/bucc-donate>.



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
Administrative Assistant: Gwenda Mayes
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 Sloten

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