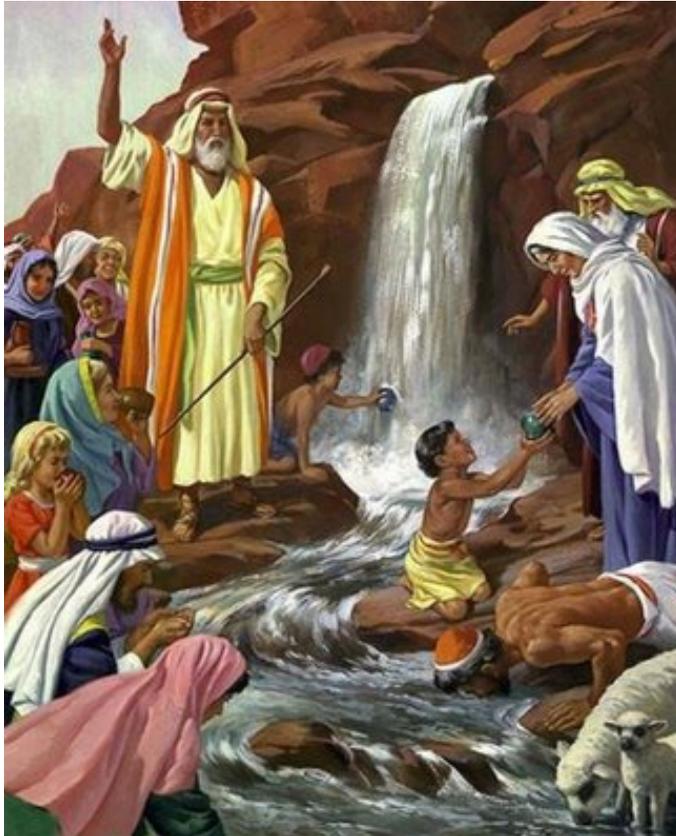


*Welcome to  
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*September 27, 2020  
Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost*



## 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.



## CHURCH LIFE

No known Bethlehem members  
were in the hospital as of last Wednesday.

### BUCC Worship Statistics during COVID Era

9/20/2020: Facebook Views – 54 complete views, YouTube Views - 17

### PRELUDE

La Tristesse Opus 19 #3  
*Gail Jennings, organ*

Frederic Chopin

### WELCOME & SHARING PARISH LIFE

Pastor Lily

### MEMBER CARE MOMENT

Judy Coucouvanis

### RESPONSIVE CALL TO WORSHIP

Katie Rowan

One: Come, let us worship God who provides for us.

**All: Even though we whine and complain, God hears our cries.**

One: Lift your voices in praise, for God has come to comfort you.

**All: Thanks be to God who forgives and heals our wounded souls.**

One: Come, celebrate God's steadfast love.

**All: Open our hearts, O Lord, and let us truly listen to your words. AMEN.**

**OPENING HYMN #709**

Glorious Things of Thee Are Spoken

Glorious things of thee are spoken,  
Zion, city of our God;  
God, whose word cannot be broken,  
formed thee for a blest abode.  
On the Rock of Ages founded,  
what can shake thy sure repose?  
With salvation's walls surrounded,  
thou mayest smile at all thy foes.

See, the streams of living waters,  
springing from eternal love,  
well supply thy sons and daughters,  
and all fear of want remove.  
Who can faint, while such a river  
ever will their thirst assuage?  
Grace which like the Lord, the giver,  
never fails from age to age.

Round each habitation hovering,  
see the cloud and fire appear  
for a glory and a covering,  
showing forth that God is near!  
Thus deriving from our banner  
light by night and shade by day,  
safe we feed upon the manna  
which God gives them when they pray.

**UNISON PRAYER OF INVOCATION**

Katie Rowan

Loving God,  
we come this day to worship with so many things on our hearts and minds.  
We are drawn away by problems and cares.  
Heal our spirits. Open our hearts.  
Help us be your disciples. **AMEN.**

## RESONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Katie Rowan

How quick we are to say yes to you, O Lord,  
and then we turn around and forget our bold words of commitment.  
We really want to serve,  
but we are very weak and are easily drawn away by cares and fears.  
We pledge ourselves to working for your kingdom  
but find ourselves pulled this way and that by other demands on our time and  
energy.  
Forgive us, O Lord, when we so quickly drop our commitments to serving you.  
Heal our spirits and give us the bold courage to truly be your disciples.  
For we ask these things in Jesus' Name. **AMEN.**

*30-SECONDS OF SILENCE*

## WORDS OF FORGIVENESS

Katie Rowan

God knows our hearts and our spirits.  
God sees our struggles and forgives our weakness.  
Know that it is in God's healing love that you live and move and have your being.  
Rejoice, for you are forgiven and God is with you always. **AMEN.**

## THE PRAYER OF OUR SAVIOR

Jim Rowan

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts [trespasses/sins],  
as we forgive our debtors [those who trespass/sin against us].  
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil;  
for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.**

## PASSING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

Jim Rowan

One: May the Peace of Christ be with you!  
**All: And also with you!**  
One: Let us share a sign of Christ's peace.

*Though we gather virtually this morning, we still have the opportunity to pass the peace to those we are with, and to fellow worshipers in the comments below.*

## **SPECIAL MUSIC**

### **SCRIPTURE**

EXODUS 17: 1-7

Kennedy Family

At the LORD's command, the whole community of Israel left the wilderness of Sin and moved from place to place. Eventually they camped at Rephidim, but there was no water there for the people to drink. So once more the people complained against Moses. "Give us water to drink!" they demanded.

"Quiet!" Moses replied. "Why are you complaining against me? And why are you testing the LORD?"

But tormented by thirst, they continued to argue with Moses. "Why did you bring us out of Egypt? Are you trying to kill us, our children, and our livestock with thirst?"

Then Moses cried out to the LORD, "What should I do with these people? They are ready to stone me!"

The LORD said to Moses, "Walk out in front of the people. Take your staff, the one you used when you struck the water of the Nile, and call some of the elders of Israel to join you. I will stand before you on the rock at Mount Sinai. Strike the rock, and water will come gushing out. Then the people will be able to drink." So Moses struck the rock as he was told, and water gushed out as the elders looked on.

Moses named the place Massah (which means "test") and Meribah (which means "arguing") because the people of Israel argued with Moses and tested the LORD by saying, "Is the LORD here with us or not?"

### **SERMON**

Is God With Us Or Not?

Pastor John

**HYMN # 608**

**I Would Be True**

I would be true, for there are those who trust me;  
I would be pure, for there are those who care;  
I would be strong, for there is much to suffer;  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare;  
I would be brave, for there is much to dare.

I would be friend of all--the foe, the friendless;  
I would be giving, and forget the gift;  
I would be humble, for I know my weakness;  
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift;  
I would look up, and laugh, and love, and lift.

**PASTORAL PRAYER & PRAYERS OF THE CHURCH**

Pastor Lily

**INVITATION TO GIVE**

Jim Rowan

When our spirits are low, we turn to each other.

When our anger flares, we need each other's gifts most.

God has generously blessed us

and granted us the privilege of sharing our blessings with others.

We give our gifts of tithes and offerings to create your kingdom of heaven.

Thanks be to God for this sacred trust.

**OUTREACH MOMENT**

Crop Walk

Tom Zieseemer

**UNISION PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Jim Rowan

As we remember your wonderful works,  
we are grateful for your many blessings,  
and are honored to return these gifts to you.

As we return these gifts to you,  
bless them and send them forth,  
that others may be showered  
with your love and your grace.  
In faithful trust, we pray. **AMEN.**

**HYMN # 560**

Leaning On The Everlasting Arms

What a fellowship, what a joy divine,  
leaning on the everlasting arms;  
what a blessedness, what a peace is mine,  
leaning on the everlasting arms.

[Refrain:]

Leaning (leaning on Jesus), leaning (leaning on Jesus),  
safe and secure from all alarms;  
leaning (leaning on Jesus), leaning (leaning on Jesus),  
leaning on the everlasting arms.

O how sweet to walk in this pilgrim way,  
leaning on the everlasting arms;  
O how bright the path grows from day to day,  
leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]

What have I to dread, what have I to fear,  
leaning on the everlasting arms?  
I have blessed peace with my Lord so near,  
leaning on the everlasting arms. [Refrain]

**BENEDICTION**

Pastor John

Go bravely and boldly into this world of confusion and pain.  
Bring God's healing words of love and forgiveness.  
Know the power of mercy and grace in your life,  
and use those wonderful gifts to serve God by serving the people.  
Go in peace. **AMEN.**

**POSTLUDE**

Toccata in G Major  
*Gail Jennings, organ*

Dietrich Buxtehude

*US elections happen on November 3, 2020. While churches can take no partisan stands, we can pray and work for a just common life as a natural extension of our faith. When Religion and Politics Meet, a video produced by the UCC Justice Witness Ministries, offers a clear outline of dos and don'ts of congregational political (not partisan) involvement.*

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0dorum2ZA0w&feature=youtu.be>

## 2020 CROP WALK IS VIRTUAL

CROP WALK 2020 - OCTOBER 11

<https://www.crophungerwalk.org/annarbormi/pllamas>

These are the local agencies that will be helped this year with proceeds from CROP WALK 2020. Please support our church team-- The Pllamas--by either going online to the link above or give online at [www.bethlehem-ucc.org](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org)



How the Walk helps:





## **HELPING IN THE SERVICES TODAY**

**Pastor:** Rev. John L. Kennedy

**Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development:** Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel

**Director of Music:** David Hahn

**Organist:** Gail Jennings

**Liturgists:** Katie Rowan, Jim Rowan, Kennedy Family

**Additional Speaker:** Judy Coucouvanis, Tom Ziesemer