



The Visitor

September 2020

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Exits to the Entrance

By Rev. John Kennedy

“But Moses pleaded with the Lord, “O Lord, I’m not very good with words. I never have been, and I’m not now, even though you have spoken to me. I get tongue-tied, and my words get tangled.” Then the Lord said to him, “Who gives people the ability to speak? Who’s responsible for making them unable to speak or hard of hearing, sighted or blind? Isn’t it I, the Lord? Now go! I’ll help you speak, and I’ll teach you what you should say.” But Moses again pleaded, “Lord, please! Send anyone else.” – Exodus 4:10-12

Have you ever considered that the words Exit and Exodus come from the same Greek root word? “Ex” = going out and “Odos” (Hodos) = a path, a way, a journey”. Exodus is “a way or path out”. Have you ever pondered that anytime you exit one space you enter another, and anytime you enter a space you exit another? It reminds me of the familiar saying, “God never shuts one door without opening another”. Or, sometimes God, never opens a door without shutting another. On your life-journey, does it seem that God first opens a door, or closes a door?

Over the next several weeks, the Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) readings will be from the Book of Exodus. Exodus begins where the Story of Joseph, Genesis 50 concludes. The Story of Joseph reminds us of God’s faithfulness. Joseph’s brothers had thrown him into a pit and then sold him into bondage. Yet, Joseph became the second-in-command to the Pharaoh and saved his family from a famine. A door closed and a door opened.

“(continued on page 2)”

**Deadline for the
October Visitor is
Monday, September 28**



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 www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2

Office Hours
 Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the office is currently closed.

(continued from page 1)

The Story of Exodus, begins with the news that the Jewish People have been enslaved by the Egyptians for over four-hundred years, and that the people have cried out to God for deliverance. They have been enslaved for so long that they no longer even know what freedom looks or feels like even though they know what bondage feels like. The Pharaoh hears a prophecy that God will send a “deliverer” to the slaves and so Pharaoh orders the killing of all Hebrew boys under the age of 2-years-old. A Levite mother places her little boy into a basket and has him placed into a stream to send him “out of” danger and he is rescued by the Pharaoh’s daughter. He is named Moses, for Pharaoh’s daughter drew him “out of” the water and took him into her household, where he was raised as an Egyptian. Being raised as a member of the royal Egyptian household taught Moses all about the politics and tactics of the Pharaoh. After Moses kills an Egyptian guard beating a slave, he is driven out of Egypt and into the desert and away from home for 40-years. Moses’ hard journey teaches him about how to navigate the desert, and how to find food and water. A new door opens for Moses and he marries Jethro’s daughter Zipporah and they have children. Moses has found a new home and is settling down, when God calls Moses to leave the familiar to go back to Egypt to lead the Hebrew slaves to freedom. Doors closing and opening, a story of entrances and exits.

Moses pleads with God not to send him back to the land he had fled, and he tells God that he does not have the talent, or gifts to accomplish the mission. Moses says to God, but I don’t speak well and I get all tongue tied, “send anyone else but me”.

“Then the Lord became angry with Moses. “All right,” he said. “What about your brother, Aaron the Levite? I know he speaks well. And look! He is on his way to meet you now. He will be delighted to see you. Talk to him, and put the words in his mouth. I will be with both of you as you speak, and I will instruct you both in what to do. Aaron will be your spokesman to the people. He will be your mouthpiece, and you will stand in the place of God for him, telling him what to say. And take your shepherd’s staff with you, and use it to perform the miraculous signs I have shown you.” - Exodus 4:14-17

God’s response to Moses is, “I chose you!” but I will give you your brother Aaron to support you. I will talk to you, you will talk to Aaron, and Aaron will talk to the people. Every time Moses feels overwhelmed or stuck, God leads helpers to use their God given gifts in support of the mission. When Moses tells the people that he is there to help them to freedom, their reaction is not positive but more like, “Really, God sent you? We were expecting Billy Graham or Joel Osteen”. Each time God delivers the people to a new measure of freedom, they grow discouraged because there is always a new obstacle to overcome. It is not easy work, Moses, Aaron, Miriam, and the people all have bad grumpy days of feeling disappointed in who they call been called to follow or who they have been called to lead. But God, used every person and opportunity to guide them to a new kind of freedom and a new identity. They learned that God sends beloved imperfect leaders to lead beloved imperfect people to become leaders.

We are all on a journey of doors and paths leading out, and doors and paths leading to new beginnings. We all begin from the same divine origin and we all end up at the same divine destination. Our task is to tend to the journey while loving each other (and ourselves, and trusting God).

“Things are not getting worse, they are getting uncovered. We must hold each other tight, and continue to hold the veil.” - Adrienne Maree Brown

God loves us ALL with no take-backs!

Pastor John

August 2020	Year to Date	YTD Target	2020/2021 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$106,665	\$104,615	\$418,458
Expenses	\$110,840	\$118,619	\$474,477
Net	(\$4,175)	(\$14,005)	(\$56,019)

Facilities Maintenance Team ...Superheroes at Work



Many thanks to our hardworking Facilities Maintenance Team and loyal volunteers. They have been hard at work this summer with their tireless dedication is helping to keep our

flowerbeds flourishing and the never-ending supply of weeds at bay. In addition, trees have been trimmed and the fan repaired.



Huge thank you to our volunteers: Ron Dechert (not pictured), Mike Haab, John Irwin, Jim Judson, Jim Stadel, Jesse Wilcox, and Tom Ziesemer. They are always looking for additional volunteers. Contact Tom Z if interested.

Facilities MT: Steve Darr, Michelle Loukotka, and Tom Ziesemer.

BETHLEHEM CEMETERY REPORT

This summer's "to do" list looks like Santa's Christmas list. There is always something we need to accomplish and our contractor is willing to do including the installation of an aluminum cross in the Memorial Garden.

The cross keeps getting pushed to the bottom of our list because of other priorities. Tom Ziesemer over the years has gently nudge us to do it. We decided to take the project on this summer. The cross is finished and will be installed on the berm of the garden facing east and west, standing about 14 feet tall.

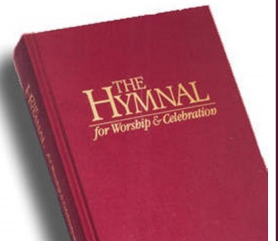
The Cemetery Board wants to thank those who have made donations towards the cross. Please keep in mind the Cemetery accepts donations for the projects like the cross, which enhance the beauty of our cemetery.

Sue Buday



HYMNAL DISTRIBUTION FOR HOME USE

The Worship Ministry Team will be distributing hymnals to Bethlehem members, who wish to have one at home for use, while we are virtual worshiping. If you would like to borrow a hymnal, please either call the church office at (734) 665-6149 or email: churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org and leave your name and phone number. We will contact you with the date and time you will be able to drive to the church parking lot and pick up a hymnal.



RADIO BROADCAST SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIP

Please remember that a lot of folks count on the weekly Radio Broadcast of our 10 o'clock worship service. This program is funded by weekly radio sponsorships, memorials, and special donations.

Have you sponsored a Radio Broadcast lately?

Are you looking for a way to honor or remember a friend or family member? A

weekly Radio Sponsorship is \$230. In addition, general donations of any amount are appreciated. Thank you for supporting this important ministry.

- Click [here](#) to go to Sign-Up Genius and choose a date, and how you want your sponsorship to read.
- You can donate online at: bethlehem-ucc.org or leave a message at the church office (734) 665-6149 and someone will get back with you.



From Your President's Desk



When I was a youth, I was privileged to travel to Europe with my parents on a "Grand Tour." One of (many) stops in (not so many) days was the city of Pompeii, buried in ash and lava by the catastrophic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 A.D. Because of the sudden violence of the eruption, much of the city was "frozen" in time: meals on tables, shops filled with wares, people caught in daily actions: a snapshot of a prosperous Roman city soon after the time of Christ's life.

I'm reminded (somewhat) of Pompeii walking the halls of our church. A sign-up poster offers the weekly Round Table Pulpit scripture discussion. For Lent. March 8 attendance pads await data entry. A study Bible awaits pick-up by a confirmation mentor. Sidewalk salt and a snow shovel await the next snow.

Peeking through the window into the closed Schmale Lounge, one sees posters with photos and plans for the April Congregational Meeting to discuss mortar repair. We just received an invoice for that work: \$48,240. Remaining work includes repair of water damage to ceilings and walls inside the church.

There are no ashes and lava, but in many ways the building is in stasis. But there are signs of life:

Each week, Ground Cover News folks set up outside the 5th Avenue entrance to distribute food.

Every day, folks from the Facilities Ministry Team (FMT) walk through the building, checking it remains in good shape and yes, finding things needing immediate attention. (Thanks, folks!)

The church grounds were not "frozen in time!" They sprouted a healthy crop of weeds which, well, grew like weeds. Many thanks to FMT and volunteers who fill our compost bins, faithfully wheeling them to the curb (with what little recycling and trash the office staff produce.)

Building rentals slowly return: The University of Michigan Nurses' COPD study has resumed in Fellowship Hall and soon Schmale Lounge. (Guess we'll have to remove those posters!) Council approved renting some parking spaces 24/7.

The church's financial picture is guarded. As I write, before August numbers are in, the first months of Fiscal 2021 are "on the money," i.e. we've roughly received and spent two months' worth of the budget. On Sunday September 20 after worship, the Financial Ministry Team reports on our first "Covid Quarter." This meeting replaces the weekly post-worship Zoom Fellowship Hour that Sunday.

The church applied for grants through the Michigan Department of Labor & Economic Opportunity on two different aspects of Covid:

Workplace Safety Grants (covering PPE, cleaning equipment, etc.)

Michigan Small Business Restart Program (similar to the Federal loan we received)

We should hear the results of these applications in September.

Last fall, I attended a round-table discussion on faith-based groups' safety and security convened by Congresswoman Debbie Dingell. Items discussed then included securing entrances/exits, training ushers to respond quickly to emergent conditions, whether certain individuals should be armed, etc.

This week, discussion continued but was of a completely different tenor: rather than focusing on our houses of worship, the talk centered around our society's unrest: shootings, demonstrations, riots, racism, etc. This discussion fits well with an opportunity here at church: a 6-week exploration of racism and white privilege using a UCC curriculum, "White Privilege: Let's Talk." This exploration begins the week of September 21, running through the week of October 26. Questions should be directed to: Chloe Schmerberg, Tim Authier, Sue Wortman, or Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel.

I was proud Leadership Council unanimously approved the Black Lives Matter Statement Bethlehem's Youth and Young Adults posted on our Facebook page. Please see page 8 for the full statement.

John Samford, President
September, 2020

Birthday Crusin'

Arlene Finkbeiner celebrated her 91st birthday on August 14 with a convertible ride. Looks like she had a wonderful time.



CONGRATULATIONS

Congratulations to our 2020 McKay Scholarship recipients.



Your Bethlehem friends and family appreciate all you have done for your church and your community. Good luck with all you pursue this year. You are in our hearts and prayers.

Kelly Gotham
Hope College

Sarah Kennedy
University of Michigan

Caroline Lesemann-Elliott
Royal Holloway University of London

Adrienne Paton
University of North Texas

Jacob Paton
University of Michigan

Chloe Schmerberg
University of San Francisco

Ellie Vasquez
Eastern Michigan University



An Important Message from Peace:

Peace Family,
Our response to the Covid-19 national emergency is at this time focused on mitigating the effects this will have on our families in these three major areas:

- Food Insecurity**
- Academic Support**
- Lost Wages and Emergency Assistance**

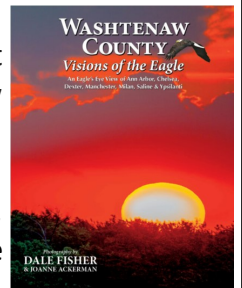
If you are inclined to help, donations made through the PayPal link on **Peace's** website will help assist our families with food insecurity, continued academic support during the school shut down and, perhaps most importantly, to aid those families facing lost wages due to childcare and other factors to avoid possible eviction or utility shutoff with emergency funds provided through our case management.

Peace's Website to Donate:
www.peaceneighborhoodcenter.org

The Bethlehem Welcome Ministry teamed up with Dale Fisher, the renowned local aerial photographer on his most recent and likely last book – Washtenaw County, Visions of the Eagle.

At 288, pages this is Dale's biggest and best book ever. For over eight years, since his last Washtenaw County book, Dale has been taking photographs in and around Ann Arbor. This new book showcases his tremendous talent and features a section on Bethlehem Church, with aerial views of our building, the surrounding neighborhood and our sanctuary on the interior.

Other sections include numerous pages dedicated to Ann Arbor, Chelsea, Dexter, Manchester, Milan, Saline, and Ypsilanti. When taken as a whole *Washtenaw: Visions of the Eagle* is a love letter to the area where the Dale Fisher grew up and to the humans who make it special.



It's a tremendous book and the best part is, because of Bethlehem's collaboration with Dale, not only is Bethlehem Church prominently displayed in this book, but we have also received a limited number of the books we can make available to our members at a reduced price. The list price of this book is \$65, however through the church we can offer them to you for \$55. We are also working on an arrangement to have each of our books signed by the author.

If you are interested purchasing a copy, please give the church office a call at (734) 665-6149. The supply is limited and will be sold on a first come first served basis.

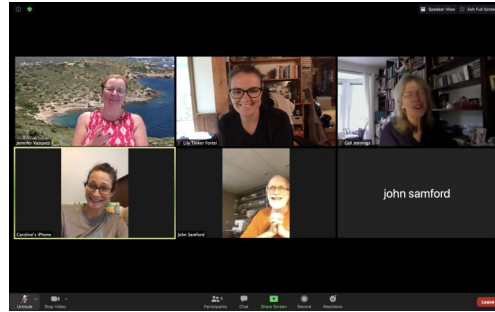
Spiritual Growth and Development

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel, Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

~ ~ HIGHLIGHTS ~ ~



Happy Hour 7.19.20



Worship Ministry Team 7.21.20



Fellowship Hour 7.26.20



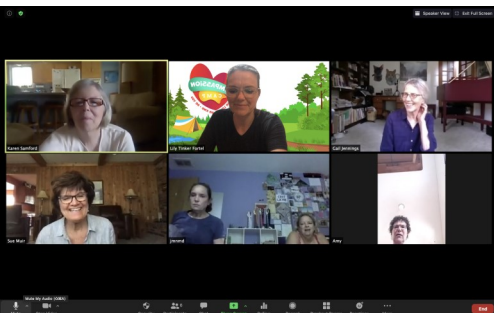
Roundtable Pulpit 7.28.20



Anti-Racism Discussion 8.19.20



Fellowship Hour 8.23.20



Yoga 8.25.20



EMT 9.2.20



Prayer Circle 9.3.20

VBS Compassion Camp

Thanks to everyone to made Compassion Camp VBS a success! Thanks to Kelsey, Eileen, Jane, Karen, and Julie for leading Sunday VBS meetings. Thanks to Kelsey and Eileen for packing boxes with crafts and weekly materials. And thanks to Bethlehem's students an families for diving into the journey!

Thanks to everyone who contributed music for our Compassion Camp worship services in August!

- Abby "Come to the Table"
- Noah "I Have Love to Share"
- Mira "Face to Face"
- Allan and Mira "Compassion Prayer"
- Ellie and Eleanore "Brave Enough"



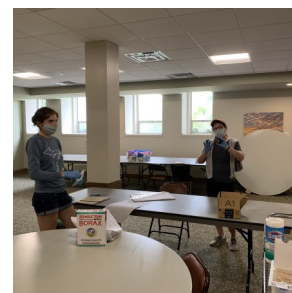
Crafts with Kai



Compassion Camp Mailing



VBS Illustrated Ministry Compassion Camp



Kelsey and Eileen assemble VBS boxes



Sofia crafting Week 1

BUCCuLeles!

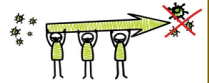
The BUCCuLeles, Bethlehem’s ukulele band continued meeting in July and August. Our August work culminated in performing Kumbaya for the August 30 worship service. Thanks, BUCCuLeles for bringing beautiful music to our services and thanks to Sarah H. for her leadership and editing of the Kumbaya project! Thanks to all our BUCCuLeles for all the fun.

We’ll reconvene in October. It’s not too late to join the BUCCuLeles! Please let Katie, Gail, Abby, Ellie or Lily know if you have any questions.



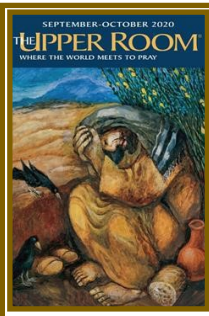
COVID-19 Emergency Response Fund

TOGETHER



In August, Bethlehem’s Outreach Ministry team led a campaign to raise money for Food Gatherers, Peace Neighborhood Center, Alpha House, and Groundcover News. These four local services agencies are doing important work to support members of our community during COVID! At last count, Bethlehem raised \$13,115, surpassing our initial \$10,000 goal!

Way to go, Bethlehem! What a beautiful Bethlehem-wide effort to support the broader community. Thanks to Sue, Roy, Laura and the entire Outreach Ministry Team for your leadership of this effort. And HUGE THANK YOU to all who gave and offered your well-wishes to the effort. See more in the Outreach MT report on page 11.



The Upper Room

The Upper Room is making their daily devotionals available as PDF for subscribing churches. Please email Lily at: lily@bethlehem-ucc.org if you’d like to receive a copy of the devotional via email.

Raffle Winners

Update from your service trip team! Do you remember that awesome Habitat Quilt and tool box that you all purchased raffle tickets for in March? We do! Thanks to everyone who contributed to this fundraising effort and gave online.

Our raffle winners will be getting an email so we can coordinate getting you your prizes!

Sunday School and Youth Group

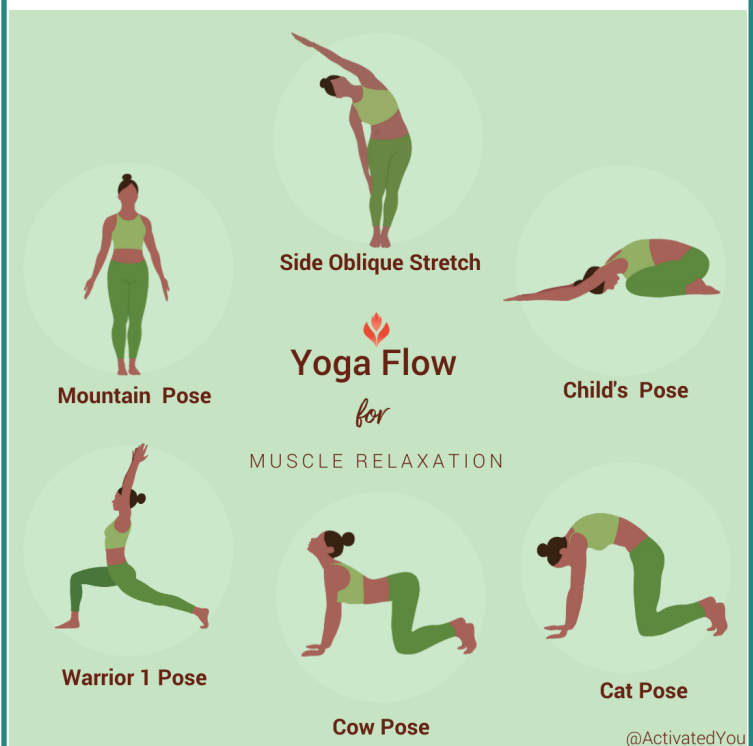
Parents! Youth! Kids! The Youth & Young Adult Ministry Team and Education Ministry Team are excited about resuming programming in September. We’re seeking YOUR input on how we can best support you this fall. Check your email for a survey link. If you haven’t received the link, please email Lily and she’ll send it to you.

Can’t make ZOOM Yoga on Tuesday evenings? Try this “Muscle Relaxation” Yoga Flow from Activated You.



Thanks to everyone who has been collecting cans for this important cause! We’re not done!

Following CROP Walk, Education Ministry Team will resume this campaign full speed! For now, please keep collecting those cans and bottles. We’re willing to help return the cans, or you can do it yourself and donate the deposit to the “Easy Water for Everyone” fund.



ANTIRACISM WORK



Let's Learn Together

Bethlehem members are invited to a 6-week exploration of racism and white privilege. We will use a "White Privilege: Let's Talk," a curriculum from the UCC as our guide.

WHERE/WHEN:

- We will meet via Zoom.
- Wednesdays September 16, 23, 30 & October 7, 14, 21 from 6:30-8:30 pm.

WHY:

- Our Covenant of Welcome calls us to "celebrate God's extravagant love" and "welcome the diverse tapestry of all people."
- We will use our growth and knowledge to work towards becoming allies and advocates working for a just world for all.
- We will become more aware of our whiteness and privilege, and its impact in a diverse society.
- We will deepen connections within our church community.

REGISTRATION REQUIRED:

- Register here: <https://forms.gle/eLpUSyPYhGKZo286>. If you are unable to access the form, email Lily to register.

QUESTIONS?


Reach out to Chloe Schmerberg, Tim Authier, Sue Wortman, or Lily Tinker Fortel.

SOLIDARITY STATEMENT

"As the Youth and Youth Adults of Bethlehem United Church of Christ, we stand in solidarity with the Movement for Black Lives and all Black, Indigenous, People of Color. We condemn all forms of racism. We are committed to being better allies. We will listen. We will learn. We will act." Original Signatories: Allan, Jenny Xander, Noah, Larisa, Sarah, Katie, Abbie, Ellie, Alton, Kelly, Sarah, John, Camille, Lily, Chloe. Additional Signers: Barb, C. J. Cresson, Diane, Dindy, Eileen, Jane, Jenell, Jennifer, Jim, Karen, Kurt Matt, Mira, Nancy, Rachel, Roy, Sallie, Sue M. Sue W. Tim, The Leadership Council, The Youth and Young Adult Ministry Team, The Open and Affirming Committee.

Allan Jenny Xander Noah Larisa Sarah Katie Abby

As the Youth and Young Adults of Bethlehem United Church of Christ, we stand in solidarity with the Movement for Black Lives and all BIPOC*. We condemn all forms of racism. We are committed to being better allies. We will listen. We will learn. We will act.


a just world for all
Bethlehem UCC, Ann Arbor, MI
*Black, Indigenous, People of Color

Ellie Alton Kelly Sarah John Camille Lily Chloe

Weekly Spiritual Growth & Development Activities

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel - Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

Sundays

- Fellowship Hour, Sundays at 11:00 am on ZOOM.

First Mondays

- Prayer Circle (October 2) at 12:00 pm via ZOOM.

Tuesdays

- Roundtable Pulpit, Tuesdays 12:00 pm.

Join our pastors for a study of the coming Sunday's scripture lesson. ZOOM link available upon request.

- Gentle Yoga, Tuesdays 5:30-6:00 pm. Join Lily for a gentle meditative yoga practice via ZOOM.

Wednesdays

- Weekly virtual Happy Hour, Wednesdays at 5:00 pm. Join others from the community for an informal midweek check-in via ZOOM.
- White Privilege: Let's Talk, Antiracism study and exploration. Beginning mid-September 6:30-8:30 pm. *Must register in advance.* See information on page 8.

Thursdays

- First Thursdays: Prayer Circle. 12:00-12:30 pm Join us for our monthly prayer circle.
- Youth Group. 6:30-8:00 pm. (some Thursdays) Youth will receive information via email.



Crop Walk Goes Virtual

Bethlehem was scheduled to host this year's CROP Walk but due to COVID-19, this year's walk will be virtual (no in-person component at Bethlehem). We're still participating in virtual CROP Walk!

Please join the Bethlehem Pillamas using our CROP Walk page: <https://www.crophungerwalk.org/annarbormi/pillamas> (scroll down to the 'Join Our Team' button on the right side to register).

NOV
3



Voting is a natural extension of faithful action.

OUR FAITHFUL VOICE IS NEEDED

Go to <https://mvic.sos.state.mi.us/>
RegisterVoter for online applications:

Absentee Ballot Application to Register to Vote

Voting is a natural extension of faithful action. No matter your opinion or political affiliation, your voice - your vote - matters and you deserve to be heard.

Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received in April thru August, 2020

BETHLEHEM CEMETERY

Tom Seyfried Memorial

COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND

Tom Seyfried Memorial

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Art French Memorial
Charles Lanis and Marian Vogel Cope
Marie Slotten Memorial
Tom Seyfried Memorial

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

John Nimz Memorial

RADIO FUND

Jim Carpenter Memorial
Godfrey & Margaret Keppler Memorial
Hilda McLaughlin Memorial
John Schneider Memorial

RADIO SPONSORSHIP

June 7 – In memory of Frederick & Lela Keppler from their children
June 14 - Sponsored by Wayne & Karen Jahnke
August 9 - In memory of Frederick & Lela Keppler from their children
August 16 - In Memory of Lorena Stein from her granddaughter Mary Raab

SCHOLARSHIP

Art French Memorial

Gifts listed were received through August 31, 2020

How to Join a Zoom Meeting 101

By Pastor Lily

1 MEETING ID ← (Think of this as the location)

Most of our Spiritual Growth & Development activities will use zoom Meeting ID

501 731 3201

2 A way to join

Phone

No computer, no problem!

Call: 312.626.6799
When prompted, enter meeting ID:
501 731 3201 #

Computer

Web Browser

Type:
<http://zoom.us/j/5017313201>

App

You can download the zoom app to your phone or computer and join that way.

Questions?

Ask Pastor Lily

734.999.0202

lily@bethlehem-ucc.org

OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM NEWS



**We aren't canceling...
we're going *Virtual!***

Walk Together Apart
Between now and our original **Walk Date** gather in groups of five or less. Walk together in a parking lot, around the block or at a city park. Text, call or video chat with other friends walking at the same time. Continue to raise money for vulnerable neighbors in our town and worldwide.

#virtualCROPHungerWalk

Be safe. *Be healthy.*




CROP WALK 2020 OCTOBER 11

Please join the
BETHLEHEM PLLAMAS
[www.crophungerwalk.org/
annarbormi/pllamas](http://www.crophungerwalk.org/annarbormi/pllamas)

(Scroll down to the "JOIN OUR TEAM" button on the right side to register!)

We also will have a line on the church's website for contributions:
CWS-CROP WALK
www.bethlehem-ucc.org

THANK YOU!

COVID-19 EMERGENCY FUND
BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
LEADERSHIP COUNCIL AND OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

↓

**OUR GOAL \$10,000
RAISED TO DATE:
\$13,115!!!**

↑

Thank you for your contributions to help:
Food Gatherers
Peace Neighborhood Center
Alpha House
Groundcover News

Your contributions will make a difference to these agencies during this time of Covid!!!

A huge thank you to the congregation for your gifts to the **Covid-19 Emergency Fund!**

The Outreach Ministry Team is so grateful for your support both financially but also the feedback we have received from our Outreach Moments during our online services.

Thank you!

Roy and Sue Muir
Co-Chairs
On behalf of the OMT

Jane Schmerberg
Eileen Koprowski
Mary Jean Raab
Jamie Dylenski
Laura Seyfried
Katie Rowan
Sue Wortman
Pastor Lily Tinker-Fortel
(Staff Support)

Mental Health during COVID-19



This is a difficult time for everyone. Take some time to take care of your mental health in addition to your physical health. We're in this together. Below are resources put together by the Washtenaw County Health Department that you are encouraged to take advantage of to help cope in this challenging time.

Reach out for support

- Connect with the Washtenaw County Community Mental Health CARES team at 734-544-3050 for support and resources about ANY mental health question. The CARES line remains fully staffed and available 24/7 during the COVID-19 response.
- Text SHARE to the Crisis Text Line at 741741
- Even if you can't be together physically, let trusted people in your life know about your worries, fears, frustrations, and plans for self-care.
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline (800) 273-8255

Stay connected to your loved ones and community as we engage in social distancing to keep each other safe.

- Call or video-chat family or friends. Science shows that hearing a loved one's voice comforts the brain.
- Join virtual gatherings, like community meetings or free fitness classes and concerts.
- Notice if you're not reaching out because of low mood rather than social distancing reasons.
- Check in with someone you trust for a few minutes every day.

Routines help us feel more grounded when things feel out of our control.

- Staying active with things that feel productive and fun can help us manage the extra stress and anxiety.
- Make a schedule for how you'll structure today to balance work with time for self-care, relaxation, and (safe/virtual) social connection.

Limit information overload.

- Set a time limit for focusing on coronavirus anxiety and plan mental health breaks to allow your body and mind time to recharge.
- Get the information you need from the links below. Moderate other news intake and limit exposure to mass hysteria online.
- Most accurate and up-to-date Washtenaw information: www.washtenaw.org/COVID19
- Michigan information: www.michigan.gov/coronavirus
- Washtenaw County Health Department social media: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram @wishyouknewwashtenaw is sharing coronavirus mental health tips on Instagram.

Practice deep breathing exercises, mindfulness or other methods of meditation.

- It's easy for our worries to get ahead of the current moment. As we face uncertainty it's important to stay grounded in the present.
- Michiganders can access a specially-curated collection of guided meditations, at-home workouts that guide people through mindful exercises, sleep and kids content to help address rising stress and anxiety. Available for free at www.headspace.com/MI
- There are also many other meditation and mindfulness apps and online resources. We are not endorsing any products, but here is a list of some free apps:

Insight Timer - mindfulness to reduce stress, anxiety, improve sleep & relaxation through guided meditation, talks, and music
 Aura - improve sleep and reduce stress, anxiety through meditations, stories, music, and more
 Breathe: Meditation & Sleep – De-stress, sleep better, be healthier with meditations and music
 Smiling Mind - guided meditations and mindfulness exercises for kids and adults
 Stop, Breathe & Think - stay tuned in with your emotions and de-stress through mindfulness and compassion exercises
 The Mindfulness App - relax, calm, focus, sleep
 Clear Fear - helps youth manage anxiety symptoms
 Combined Minds - helps families and friends provide mental health support
 What's Up – help to cope with depression, anxiety, stress, and more
 Mind Shift - designed for young adults struggling with anxiety
 Happify - mood training program
 MoodTools - supporting people with depression

Additional Resources

[Manage Anxiety & Stress During Coronavirus \(English, Spanish\)](#) - An overview from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) that provides tips for people in general, parents, first responders and those released from quarantine:

[Mental Health & COVID-19](#) - Advice, resources, and messages from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

[Taking Care of Your Mental Health in the Face of Uncertainty](#) from American Foundation for Suicide Prevention

[Helping Young Kids through the COVID-19 Crisis](#) - Quick tips from Zero to Thrive and Michigan Medicine Department of Psychiatry

[Parenting During COVID-19](#) from Psychology Today

[Taking Care of Your Behavioral Health](#) - tips for social distancing, quarantine, and isolation from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

[Taking Care of Your Mental Health while Social Distancing, Isolating, or Quarantining](#) - PDF from Washtenaw County Health Department

Essential Services Information During COVID-19



Energy Bill

DTE and Consumers Energy have shutoff for non-payment for low-income eligible customers as well as for senior citizens have been suspended. For those in need of payment assistance due to loss of income or medical condition, contact 1-800-477-4747 (DTE) or 1-800-477-5050 with any questions.



Internet Access

Internet providers are offering free packages for new low-income customers or households with students, including Comcast (866.500.0017), Charter (833.267.6094), AT&T (888.333.6651), MetroNet (www.metroNetInc.com/studentspecial)



Moratorium on Evictions

The State of Michigan and Washtenaw County courts have issued temporary moratoriums on evictions. Visit sscm.org/coronavirus/washtenaw-county-resources or call 734-665-6181 to learn more.



Unemployment Services

You can file a new claim for unemployment benefits by visiting www.michigan.gov/UIA or calling 1-866-500-0017



Pet Supply Assistance

Huron Valley Humane Society has a free pet food pantry. To learn more call 734-661-3552. If you can't leave your home and cannot afford to purchase food online, please contact kariem@hshv.org.



Childcare Options

Under the "Stay Home, Stay Safe" executive order, childcare providers are only open for essential workers. To learn more, go to <https://www.helomegrow-mi.org/essential>



Food Pantry

Visit foodgatherers.org or call (734) 761-2796 for a list of their open pantries around the county.



Public Transportation

TheRide is suspending the collection of fares on all fixed-routes and demand response services, however their service levels will be reduced. For more information, call 734-996-0400 or visit theride.org.

You can find more information about these and other services at
Washtenaw.org/3100

IS COVID-19 MAKING IT HARD TO MAKE ENDS MEET?

If you're struggling to keep up with rent, mortgage, or utilities payments...



Or need help paying for food, childcare, or gas for your car...

The Barrier Busters Network is here to support you.

Reach out to one of our community's Barrier Busters agencies to help you pay your bills as soon as possible:

Washtenaw.org/2818

Barrier Busters is coordinated by:



Last Updated: 4/15/2020

RESOURCES DURING COVID-19 STUDENT FOOD ASSISTANCE

What is the Pandemic Electronic Benefit (P-EBT) Transfer Program?

The P-EBT program expands the existing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) to support families with students who are enrolled in free and reduced lunch program while schools are closed.



Who is eligible for the program and what will they receive?

Families with students (ages 5-18) who are enrolled in the for free or reduced-price school meals will receive \$193.80 per student to cover March/April and 182.40 per student for May/June. This includes:

Families Who Already Have A Bridge Card

WHAT: These families can continue using their Bridge Cards as they typically would. Additional benefits will begin being deposited in mid-April and will be staggered over a 10 day period.

Families Not Currently Receiving Food Assistance

WHAT: These families will receive a letter from MDHHS describing how to set up and use their Bridge Cards in late-April, with the EBT cards arriving by the first week of May.

What if you need food assistance, but do not have a student in the free or reduced lunch program?

In addition to the P-EBT program providing extra support for families with students, the State of Michigan is streamlining the application and review process to receive food assistance, has increase the amount of monthly assistance received, and has temporarily removed the work requirement. Learn more, including how to apply: newmbridges.michigan.gov



Families can use their Bridge cards at any retailer that accepts SNAP EBT benefits. You can find a list of SNAP retailers at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-locator>



Last Updated: 5/1/2020

RESOURCES DURING COVID-19 SENIOR FOOD ASSISTANCE

What options for food assistance are available to seniors in our community?

Washtenaw County is working with Food Gatherers and Senior Centers and nonprofit agencies around the county to provide meals for all members of our community.



What does someone need to do to receive meals?

You can reach out to providers to inquire about the services they are currently offering. Please note, some of these providers are working near or at capacity due to increased demand, so your patience and flexibility is appreciated.

- Chelsea/Manchester Meals on Wheels | 734-475-9245
- Dexter Senior Center | 734-426-7737
- Jewish Family Services | 734-769-0209
- Milan Seniors for Healthy Living | 734-508-6229
- Northfield Township Community Center | 734-449-2295
- Pittsfield Senior Center | 734-822-2117
- Ypsilanti Senior Center | 734-483-5014
- Ann Arbor Meals on Wheels | 734-998-6686
- Ypsilanti Meals on Wheels | 734-487-9669



Once I'm signed up, what will I be receiving and how often?

Depending on which provider you are able to connect with, you will either be able to pick up multiple meals or have them delivered to you on a regular schedule. Meals may be already prepared, frozen, or capable of being stored on your shelf. More information can be provided when you connect with one of the organizations listed above.



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: Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel	Education: Eileen Koprowski	Secretary: Tim Authier
Financial Administrator: Betty Clark	Worship: Jennifer Vasquez	Treasurer: Jim Rowan
Parish Administrator: Julie Rhodes	Member Care: Jenny Foster	At-Large Members:
Administrative Assistant: Gwenda Mayes	Welcome: Jane Schmerberg	Dindy Haab
Director of Music: David Hahn	Outreach: Sue Muir/Roy Muir	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: Sue Buday	
	Nominations Committee: Cresson Slotten	



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