



The Visitor

December 2020

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Mission Impossible?

When **Elizabeth** was six months pregnant, God sent the angel **Gabriel** to Nazareth, a city in Galilee, to a virgin who was engaged to a man named **Joseph**, a descendant of David's house. The virgin's name was **Mary**. When the angel came to her, he said, "Rejoice, favored one! **The Lord is with you!**" Mary was disturbed and confused by these words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be. The angel said, "**Don't be afraid**, Mary, God is honoring you".

Luke

2:26

Let's just say it, we have all experienced a wild and scary ride in 2020, and at many times has seemed "impossible", and there will be many stories told about this shared experience journey. "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" year-of-2020, is going to produce many books, movies, plays, songs and musicals. Perhaps, the narrative will describe an entire world that is being shaken to its core? Included will be many "Once upon a time" tales of: discouragement & HOPE; estrangement & PEACE; sorrow & JOY; hate & LOVE, and with us CHRIST, (Immanuel =God with us)! "O come, O Come, Immanuel, and ransom captive Israel!"

Could God's people have felt this way 2000+years-ago, and did they share those stories? Yep, and that's why we have the stories (Scriptures) we read every Advent and Christmas and Advent Candles we light to represent Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, and The Christ Candle. There are people with names like; Elizabeth & Zechariah, Joseph & Mary, Angels & Shepherds, and two little babies on the way to be named John (The Baptist) and his cousin Jesus. In Luke 2, God is speaking to Mary, through an angel (named "Gabriel"). In an "impossible time", Mary hears,

"**The Lord is with you!**" and "**Don't be afraid!**". Each day in the waiting time of Advent please claim these words of God for yourself and our world.

(continued on page 2)

**Deadline for the
Combined January/
February Edition of the
Visitor is Monday, January 4**



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Office Hours

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

(continued from page 1)

Mary is being reassured, with hearing “don’t be afraid”, and Gabriel continues,

Mary, “you will conceive and give birth to a son, and you will name him Jesus. He will be great and he will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of David his father. He will rule over Jacob’s house forever, and there will be no end to his kingdom.”

Mary replies to the angel, **“How will this happen** since I haven’t had sexual relations with a man?”.

Like Mary, we are not sure how the “impossible” will enter into the world again. We cannot not see the whole staircase as we take the first step, each morning, as we rise. God, is always with us in the mix of these weird times. God, has a plan! God, is always working for good in spite of the pains of life. God continues to believe in us (you) even when we struggle to hope. God, the “Holy One”, the creator of the heavens and the universe enters into our world not as someone immune to pain but in the fragility and helplessness of an infant. Jesus, “God with us” is not born into a family, of earthly royalty and power but as the child of a poor, Palestinian Jewish couple living on the margins. The power of God’s love, and Holy Spirit takes over where our limits begin. Our cry of “God help!” and Mary’s & Joseph’s cry of help, “O Come, Immanuel!” are in God’s mercy, heard. God keeps his promises! We remember, “hey, breathe for a minute, I’m not alone, God, is with me! God, will take the “steering wheel”. We don’t have to try and play God, or be God because the job is already filled. We are weak but God is strong, “yes, Jesus loves me”, “Jesus loves me, this I know”. Like Mary, we can say, “God let it be according to your will”. Even Jesus say’s to God, Not my will but your will”. This is not giving up, it is an of trusting God and embracing a God who can accomplish more than we could even imagine. God’s love always wins in the long-run.

*The angel replied, **“The Holy Spirit will come over you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. Therefore, the one who is to be born will be holy. He will be called God’s Son. Look, even in her old age, your relative Elizabeth has conceived a son. This woman who was labeled ‘unable to conceive’ is now six months pregnant. Nothing is impossible for God.”** Then Mary said, “I am the Lord’s servant. Let it be with me just as you have said.” Then the angel left her. Luke 1:26-38*

God’s Hope, Peace, Joy, Love, through Christ!

Pastor John

Worship at Bethlehem United Church of Christ

Worship services will continue to be on-line (or on-radio) only. No in-person worship services shall be conducted this calendar year, including Christmas Eve.

At its October meeting, Leadership Council affirmed its earlier decision to suspending worship in our facilities due to the COVID virus.

The topic will be revisited in early 2021, but at this time with literally thousands of new cases in our state on a daily basis, it is ill-advised to gather intentionally in an enclosed space, despite social distancing, temperature checks and good intentions.

Everyone should be treated as a beloved child of God, who is also potentially an asymptomatic virus spreader.

Spiritual Growth and Development from Lily

On Sunday, November 29, we marked the first Sunday in Advent. The Advent Season is many things for many people. It can be a time of pause and preparation; a time of reflection, of honoring the past and present; and a time of anticipation, of looking forward to the celebration of Jesus's life.

In this time of COVID, the "pause" that we usually seek during Advent may seem painfully familiar. Our lives have changed dramatically in 2020. The current realities of COVID will necessitate lockdown and social distancing through the Christmas season and likely beyond. For many of us, we deeply yearn for the days of the hustle and bustle of the Christmas Season. We wish for nothing more than being with the communities and people we love. Being *with*, in-person. We wish for worship services in the Sanctuary, holiday social gatherings, and community events which typically define the season. The traditional Advent retreat into the beauty and depth of the darkness of winter may seem all-too-familiar this December. And, still, we are invited into it.

This December as in each December-past, we are invited to re-center the Holy in our daily lives. Yes, even this year. Even in the sometimes seemingly monotonous realities of COVID.

Even with the challenges of the past eight months, many of you have embraced this time as a time of renewal. You've reconnected with favorite pastimes: baking, crafting, puzzling. You've found new ways to connect with, and express care to, family and friends: phone calls, letters, video conferences. You've embraced healthy practices: walks in nature, fitness regimens, eating well. If you have found space for such things, perhaps your Advent practices will open your eyes to the refreshing sacred of now-familiar routines. If you haven't had time for such pause, perhaps Advent will provide the needed invitation.

I believe devotion to intentional pause and presence during this Advent season can help open us to the promises of Jesus's birth and his life teachings. I also believe it can help open our eyes to the beauty of the "right now," and the possibilities of our individual lives and collective being in the months and years ahead. Jesus was born, an outcast babe, into a world of pain and oppression. Into that world, he brought transformative messages of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love. Now, we pause in this literal and metaphorical winter season to ready ourselves so that we can be open to the Light that is to come. As we pause, perhaps we will find ourselves open to glimmers of Light already in our midst.

Though church is different, your church is here to be supportive of you during this Advent season and always. In the pages of this Visitor, you read how ministry teams are actively working to serve the Bethlehem community and our world. You'll see that church life is different, but that the church is still *alive*. Thanks to Member Care Ministry Team's insights and the work of staff, each Bethlehem member will receive a print copy of this Visitor. Below, you'll find opportunities for connecting with your church during this Advent season. You'll read about resources and Spiritual Growth and Development events that will be available to you and the community in hopes of enriching your spiritual practices. As ever, I am available to each of you for caring conversations during this time. Most importantly, know that your Bethlehem staff and ministry teams are eager to serve you, to receive your feedback, and to find new and creative ways to support your faith journey. I wish you all the Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love, and renewal of this season, the Christmas story, and the New Year.

An Advent Poem

As you read this poem, may your heart be open to the countless ways you welcome God into your life each day.

Making the House Ready for the Lord by Mary Oliver
Dear Lord, I have swept and I have washed but
still nothing is as shining as it should be
for you. Under the sink, for example, is an
uproar of mice it is the season of their
many children. What shall I do? And under the eaves
and through the walls the squirrels
have gnawed their ragged entrances but it is the season
when they need shelter, so what shall I do? And
the raccoon limps into the kitchen and opens the cupboard
while the dog snores, the cat hugs the pillow;
what shall I do? Beautiful is the new snow falling
in the yard and the fox who is staring boldly
up the path, to the door. And still I believe you will
come, Lord: you will, when I speak to the fox,
the sparrow, the lost dog, the shivering sea-goose, know
that really I am speaking to you whenever I say,
as I do all morning and afternoon: Come in, Come in.

From Your President's Desk



"We ask that you remember that all music shared in the service is an act of worship not performance. Please refrain from applause. There are many ways by which you can thank musicians after the service. Thank you."

Perhaps you remember the above item in Bethlehem bulletins a few years back. If not, suffice it to say a previous Pastor felt there were certain rules of decorum for a worship service. Nothing wrong with that. There's a time and place for everything (well, most things!) Why dredge up something from the past?

Well, the past has a way of returning in unexpected ways. I stumbled upon that quote while searching through past copies of worship bulletins stored on the church's computer. I'd been asked to locate any recordings of Tom Folk singing at a Bethlehem worship service. Locating a folder of folders of bulletins, I "let my computer do the walking" and had it search for the word "Folk." *Geezer clarification:* back in the old days, folk wanting to purchase goods or services would make the trek to likely purveyors. With the advent of the telephone (landlines!) they were urged to make a call instead: locating the business' telephone number with their fingers (phonebook!) which could then be used to (rotary) dial up to ask if an actual physical trip were appropriate. But I digress... Good thing Tom wasn't named "Tom Church!"



I don't know how it began, but I'm as guilty as anyone of writing sentences such as "All Bethlehem folk are invited to the potluck!" Of course, many such sentences were found! It was "low grade ore," but

there were nuggets. I located four services in which Tom and Mary Ann sang during worship.

With those dates, I located the corresponding CD's on which they'd been recorded, mostly in 2012, extracted the songs, and stitched them together: <http://bethlehemcemetery.biz/Folks/Folk.html>.

On a completely different topic: Leadership Council has given me the go-ahead to arrange to rent the house next to the church at 437 S. 4th Ave, ("Lily's House.") I've begun negotiations with a realty company specializing in managing rental property. With the holidays, COVID, etc., I'd judge we're well positioned to rent it sometime next spring!

Lastly: if you're pining for an "old fashioned BUCC Christmas Eve service," go to <https://bit.ly/2KTBHFb> where you'll (hopefully!) find a compendium of Christmas photos and songs. Merry Christmas!

John Samford
December 2020

Contribution Statements Mailed

Our financial administrator, Betty Clark, has mailed contribution statements primarily for the purpose of informing you where you stand on your Bethlehem charitable contributions as of November 30. There will be no pledge information on this statement, but if you want to know where you stand on your 2020-2021 pledge, please email bettyclark@bethlehem-ucc.org and she will be happy to give you that information.

In early January you will receive your December 31 statements for the calendar year. Those are for tax purposes and will also not include pledge information. If email is not convenient, you can call the church office at 734-665-6149 with questions and we will get back to you as soon as we can.



BUCC Covid-19 Restriction Updates

Members and visitors of Bethlehem,

Since the beginning of the pandemic, our church staff and leadership have been proactive in steps taken to minimize the risk of contacting Covid-19. Our church remains closed for in-person services while limited building use has been allowed with proper mitigation. Recently, the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MiDHHS) issued new restrictions which further impact some activities.

Our Covid-19 task force reviewed the most recent restrictions and listened to concerns for personal safety from our church staff. After careful consideration, our task force made the following recommendations that pertain to ongoing building use and visitation. These recommendations were approved by our Leadership Council.

- 1) All non-essential activity must be suspended until further notice. Non-essential activity is defined as any activity which can be reasonably performed remotely.
- 2) Essential activity conducted inside the building must be limited to only the minimum amount of time required to complete the essential task(s).
- 3) Use of church building space for meetings or other gatherings are not permitted at this time.
- 4) All approved building use must be scheduled in advance through the Parish Administrator. Visitors to the church office should be by appointment as church staff may not have regular office hours during this period.
- 5) Gym rentals for sporting activities are suspended.

In addition to the restrictions listed above, BUCC maintains previously established mitigation steps which include; hand hygiene, social distancing, face coverings while in the building, and self-monitoring with isolation as appropriate.

We all hope that we will come through this new upsurge as quickly as is safely possible. We will update our congregation as restrictions change going forward. We appreciate the cooperation and support of our members during these times.

Ron Dechert

BUCC Covid-19 Task Force-Lead



Visions of the Eagle

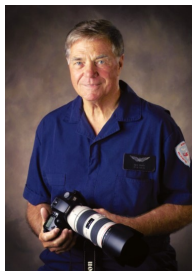
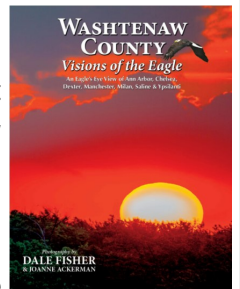
The Bethlehem Welcome Ministry teamed up with Dale Fisher, the renowned local aerial photographer on his most recent and likely last book – Washtenaw County, Visions of the Eagle.

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. Each of our copies of the book have been 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

Exploring Our Shadows-Reflecting on Bias



Bethlehem's exploration of white privilege and antiracism work continues with "Exploring Our Shadows," a series led by Bethlehem member Tim Authier with help from Chloe. This opportunity to explore biases more broadly began November 11, but all are welcome to join our December sessions! Rooted in the podcast series *Learning How to See* with faith leaders Jacqui Lewis, Brian McLaren, and Richard Rohr, this course will help us continue our commitment to antiracism and live-into our congregation's Covenant of Welcome.

6:30-8:00pm Wednesdays 12/2, 12/9, 12/16, 12/23*, 12/30.
*afternoon time TBD.

By the end of this leg of our journey we will...

- Examine and understand bias.
- Explore the connection between bias and privilege.
- Explore the Connection to ONA.
- Begin seeing our own biases.
- Begin the challenge of dismantling and owning our biases.

RSVP to Tim requested but not required.

Why we do antiracism work at Bethlehem:

- Bethlehem's 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.

Youth Group



I'm really missing the Youth Group's annual Christmas Lock-In this month. Here's a picture of some of our youth at last year's Christmas Lock-In. The Youth group will meet via Zoom on Sunday December 6 and Sunday December 20 at 12noon. This week, Youth Group members received the Serrv chocolate advent calendar as well as {THE EXPLORATION} a devotional created by the Michigan Conference staff for youth! The kit provides a weekly theme as well as a related craft and reflection invitation. We'll be exploring the Exploration together over email and Zoom throughout Advent.

easy water
for Everyone®



Thank you to everyone who donated to Easy Water for Everyone in October and November! Bethlehem has raised \$6,235.37 for this important cause! Our initial goal was \$3,500, which would have paid for the installation and maintenance of a water filtration system for five years. Thanks to you, we have surpassed this goal and Easy Water for Everyone will be able to do even more wonderful work! Huge thanks to the Education Ministry Team, Bethlehem's children and youth, and Outreach Ministry Team for leading this effort. And thanks to Bethlehem members Fritz and Evelyn Port for teaching Bethlehem about this amazing organization! See Fritz's article about Easy Water for Everyone on page 9 of this Visitor.

Bethlehem Member to serve as General Synod Delegate

The UCC is active! On Saturday, November 14 the Michigan Conference held our annual meeting via Zoom. During the meeting, Bethlehem member Chloe Schmerberg was appointed as the Covenant Association's representative for General Synod 2021 and 2023! Thank you, Chloe, for committing to represent Bethlehem, the Covenant Association, and the entire Michigan Conference in this capacity! Bethlehem, you can be proud!



BUCCuLeles: Song Books, Giving Thanks, and More!



BUCCuLele 11/15

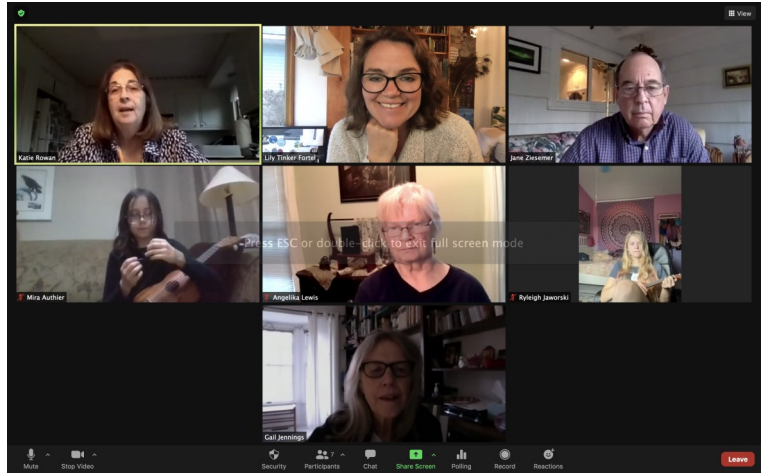
The BUCCuLeles are back at it! We've enjoyed our weekly jam sessions on Wednesdays at 4pm (everyone's invited!). Two of our youngest BUCCuLeles have begun individual lessons courtesy of Katie R.! Tom Ziesemer represented the BUCCuLeles with a beautiful rendition of "Give Thanks" during a November worship service. Be sure to listen for other BUCCuLele members performing favorite Christmas tunes during worship services in December. And our BUCCuLeles received a special gift of two songbooks on Thanksgiving week. Special thanks to Katie Rowan for assembling and delivering our Summer and Holiday BUCCuLele songbooks!



HIGHLIGHTS



Fellowship Hour 11/8



BUCCuleles Jam Session 11/11



Fellowship Hour 11/15



Fellowship Hour 11/22



Anti-Racism Discussion Group 11/22

Weekly Spiritual Growth & Development Activities

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel - Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development

Weekly Spiritual Growth and Development Activities

Sundays

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

Tuesdays

- Roundtable Pulpit Bible Study, Tuesdays 12:00 pm.
Join your pastors for a study of the coming Sunday's scripture lesson. ZOOM link available upon request.
- Advent-themed Gentle Yoga, Tuesdays 5:30-6:00 pm. Join Lily for very gentle meditative yoga practice via ZOOM. *NOTE: No Yoga January 5*

Wednesdays

- BUCCuleles Jam Session—Weekly at 4:00 pm.
- Exploring Our Shadows: A pod-cast based inquiry into biases. Continuation of our antiracism study and exploration. Wednesdays thru 12/30, 6:30-8:00 pm. See information on page 6

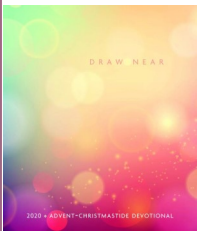
Other SG&D Events

- Prayer Circle: First Thursdays (12/3) 12:00-12:30 pm. *No Prayer Circle in January.*
- Virtual Happy Hour: 5:00-5:30 pm. 2nd and 4th Wednesdays (12/9 and 12/23). Join others from the community for an informal midweek check-in via ZOOM.
- Second Sunday, Sunday School: 12/13 via ZOOM from 11:00-11:30 am. Details via email.

Youth Group In December

- * We'll meet Sunday afternoons 12/6 and 12/20 at 12:00 pm via ZOOM. Check your email for weekly updates.

Advent Devotionals



"Draw Near" Advent Devotional by stillspeaking writers group.

- Digital Download. You can purchase a PDF download of this Bethlehem favorite by googling "Pilgrim Press Draw Near."
- Hard Copies. Digital download isn't an option for you? We have purchased hard

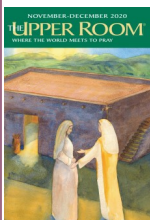
copies of this Bethlehem favorite! Please contact Lily if you wish to have a hard copy.

Illustrated Advent Calendar from Salt

Your member care ministry team has selected an Advent Calendar with daily reflection prompts, actions, etc. from Salt Project.



- Hard Copy. The calendar will be mailed to Bethlehem's homebound members this week.
- PDF. We will also provide a pdf of the calendar for all Bethlehem members who wish to receive it. Please email Pastor Lily if you wish to receive it.



Upper Room Devotional

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

Sunday School



- Second Sunday, Sunday school, 12/13 & 1/10
Zoom 11:00-11:30 am. Details via email
- Special thanks to the Education Ministry Team for their support of Bethlehem's children and families during this time! Each month, Bethlehem kids receive two postcards from the Education Ministry team. And in December, they'll get two special deliveries: a Christmas craft box (thanks to Nancy Pieske), and the Serrv chocolate advent calendar with a copy of *Faithful Families for Advent* by Traci Smith, a book of spiritual practices for making the season sacred.



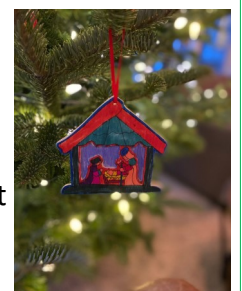
EMT Meeting 11/10



Faithful Families



Kai Ornament



Sofia Ornament

Easy Water For Everyone

by Fritz Port

As a giving project for 2020, Bethlehem had chosen to support Easy Water for Everyone. This charity (NGO) has grown to serve over 20 villages in Africa where only polluted water is available. Bacteria and viruses in drinking water lead to very serious intestinal infections that can kill small children.

As kidney specialists (nephrologists), we know that water can be purified of all bacteria and viruses when you pump infected water through a filter that is used for cleansing blood in hemodialysis. Therefore, we use a very simple system that involves the villagers directly. All you need is to pump the available infected water up into an elevated holding tank from where it can flow by gravity through several hemodialysis filters and from there to a faucet. Whenever you turn on the faucet, clean water runs through the filters at about a gallon per minute. Since no electricity is required, it works where the need is the greatest, in remote villages. Village populations up to 1500, gladly use this clean water instead of the polluted water as they notice an immediate effect on their health. We train villagers to flush the filters 3x/day and our staff fills the large tank using a gasoline driven pump every few days.

It really works. I saw the excitement and gratitude when I visited with people and the elders in villages. We recently published our second scientific paper (doi 10.2166/ws.2020.236). The need for clean water is huge worldwide, several other charities are doing similar work, but easywaterforeveryone.org is the charity that is effective when no electricity is available.

We are so excited to learn that your contributions have surpassed the goal of \$3500 to provide clean water for a new village in Ghana for the next five years. This news is so amazing. Thank you all and particularly Bethlehem's youth group that started it all by collecting coins during Lent. I wish you could see the happy villagers and their beautiful children.

Youth and Children Help with Children's Moments!



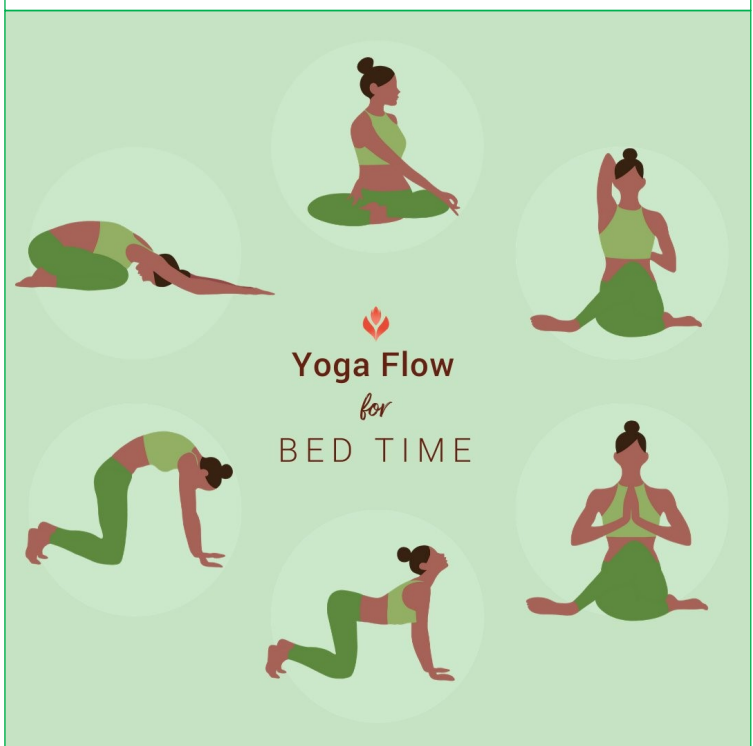
We won't have a traditional Christmas Pageant this year, but Bethlehem's Education Ministry Team is preparing something special! We are also inviting Bethlehem's children and youth to send any photos of yourselves doing what you love to do over the holidays; a 1-2 minute video reading from a favorite book, a song, or maybe you'd like to show off your crafts and decorations. Please let Lily and Eileen know if you have photos and/or videos to share!

Pumpkin Painting Contest Winners!

Congratulations to all of the participants of our 2020 Pumpkin Painting Contest. The winners of our Facebook vote were Jenell, Patti, Sue M., and Jane Z. with the Pastor Lily pumpkin. Congratulations! The winning team will receive a Serrv chocolate advent calendar. Thanks to all who participated!



Can't make Yoga on Tuesday evenings? Try this "Yoga Flow for Bed Time" from Activated You. (remember to do the poses on both sides!)



BUCCuleles: One-on-One Zoom Lessons

One-on-one zoom ukulele lessons are being offered for elementary age youth. A parent or another adult attends with the youth. There's one spot left! If you have an interested musician, contact Katie: rowank55@gmail.com to schedule at your convenience.

CHRISTMAS FUND OFFERING 2020

They came when you needed them. They answered the phone when you called. They baptized and married and buried your loved ones. They gave up weekend after weekend after weekend to care for your spirit, lead you in worship, and point to God in your midst.

Some of them did it for less money than they could easily live on. Some of them did it for less than they would have been willing to do any other job for, because of what they believe about who God is, and what they believe about who *you* are.

For all the sacrifices that clergy and lay church workers have made in our congregations, over 100 years ago the Pension Boards of the United Church of Christ created the **Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund**, to help support them in retirement and during times of emergent need.

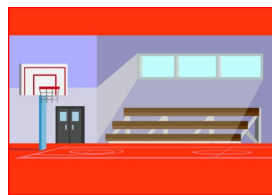
Use this [link](#) to be connected with BUCC's online giving or mail your donation to the church office.

The Christmas Fund provides Supplementation of Small Annuities, Supplementation of Health Premiums, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks for retirees and those facing unforeseen financial hardship.

Join with others in the United Church of Christ to make "the light shine in the darkness" for those who have given so much to our church.



Gym Rental for Members



Bethlehem UCC members can rent the gym for \$15 per hour, but must agree to follow the "Covid-19 Mitigation

Expectations for Church Space Rental" guidelines, which includes mask use, sanitizing, contact list, screening and social distancing. Please contact the church office for information and scheduling options at info@bethlehem-ucc.org or 734-665-6149.



NEED HEALTH INSURANCE?

ENROLL NOW!



Marketplace Open Enrollment Period

November 1st – December 15th, 2020

Enroll at HealthCare.gov

Eligible for Medicaid?

Enroll all year round at:

www.mibridges.michigan.gov



LET US HELP YOU GET ENROLLED FOR 2021!

For free help with enrolling in Medicaid or the Insurance Marketplace, contact any of the organizations below:



(734) 544-3030



MICHIGAN MEDICINE
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

(877) 326-9155



(734) 971-1073



(734) 712-2009



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 THE CEMETERY BOARD

Merry Christmas and our best wishes for a safe and healthy New Year.

Sue Buday, Susan Irwin, Jim Lutz, Sallie Stadel and Marty Seyfried



MEMBER CARE MOMENT



AM/FM radios are needed by some of members who prefer to listen to the worship service on the radio. Please contact Jenny Foster at membercare@bethlehem-ucc.org if you have a radio you would like to donate. Also, if you are in need of a radio, please email or call Jenny at 734-646-8441.

Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received thru November 30, 2020

Easy Water for Everyone Fund

Lily Tinker Fortel Ordination Honorarium

Property Improvement Fund

Radio Fund

Robert Livesay Memorial
Gladys Schlenker Memorial

Gifts listed were received through
November 30, 2020

RADIO SPONSORSHIP

November 1 – In memory of Carole Katz from the Jay and Larry Katz Families
November 15 – In memory of Sally's Father, Dr. Wallace D. Moore, from Kevin & Sally Elmiger

HOLIDAY OUTREACH



Outreach Ministry is introducing
“Holiday Outreach Appeal 2020”
to help **Peace Neighborhood Center,**
Alpha House,
Food Gatherers and
Ground Cover

with holiday needs for their families.

Instead of asking our members to shop for toys, clothing and gift cards, we’re making it a COVID-SAFE appeal by setting up a fund. Your contributions to this fund will be given to the non-profits, for them to determine what the greatest needs are for their clients.

You can give online at Bethlehem’s website

www.bethlehem-ucc.org

“Outreach Holiday Appeal Fund”

or send a check to Bethlehem

423 S. Fourth Avenue 48104

Deadline is December 14

**\$1=3 MEALS FOR
FOODGATHERERS
\$25 FOR ALPHA
HOUSE WILL FILL
ONE CHILD’S
CHRISTMAS
STOCKING**

Peace Neighborhood Center is also setting up an [Amazon Wish List](#) on their website for toys that can be ordered by you and then directly sent to Peace.

Another safe way to shop!

www.peaceneighborhoodcenter.org





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.
- ♦ **Worshiping** 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: Pastor 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: Jennifer Vasquez
Member Care: Jenny Foster
Welcome: Jane Schmerberg
Outreach: Sue Muir/Roy Muir
Fellowship: Jan Eadie
Youth & Young Adult: Katie Rowan
Bethlehem Cemetery: Sue Buday
Nominations Committee: Cresson Slotten

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

President: John Samford
Vice President: Ron Dechert
Secretary: Tim Authier
Treasurer: Jim Rowan
At-Large Members:
 Dindy Haab
 Pat Huibregtse
 Pam Rutledge
Ex Officio: Rev. John Kennedy