



# The Visitor

May 2021  
Bethlehem United Church of Christ

## Bethlehem's Pledge Campaign Kicks Off!

BUCC leadership has been focusing on our next fiscal year, beginning June 1, 2021 -- FY 2022. The work has been a combination effort by many:

Ministry Teams made budgetary requests for our next program year.

The Financial Ministry Team gathered and refined those requests into a proposed budget (along with income sources).

The Leadership Council approved that proposed budget be shared with congregants.

The Financial Campaign Task Force made a stewardship packet for BUCC members:

A brochure highlighting BUCC's mission.

A cover letter explaining the process with graphs showing proposed

Income (note: **no** projected use of BUCC's investment funds!) Expenses.

A pledge card. A self-addressed return envelope.

The office staff and volunteers prepared, copied, addressed and stuffed envelopes.

The next steps in the process depend on **you!** When your stewardship packet arrives, please study it carefully. Remind yourself about our church's mission and programs by reviewing the brochure. Read the cover letter and study the income and expense graphs representing what leadership would like our budget to be for this next year. Meditate and pray, recall the theme of the campaign: **Loving God and Loving Neighbor**. Fill in the pledge card and mail it back.

Dates to note:

Financial Campaign Task Force Presentation after worship Sunday May 2 (coffee hour).

Pledge cards due in church office by Wednesday May 12.

Stewardship Sunday is May 16.

Annual congregational meeting Sunday June 13 after worship. Click [HERE](#) to Join Zoom Meeting (Meeting ID: 879 7114 3254)

**Deadline for the Combined  
June / July Edition of the  
Visitor is Thursday, June 10**



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

## From Your President's Desk



This spring is a busy time at Bethlehem! Let me share some events & actions, both recent and forthcoming.

### Budget for FY 2022

Saturday April 10 Leadership Council heard next year's budget requests from Ministry Teams and others (Personnel, Administrative, etc.) at a meeting the Finance Ministry Team (FMT) called to develop a budget to finance BUCC's plans and dreams. A number of those who participated remarked on the energy and enthusiasm. It is good to plan together!

### Stewardship Campaign

Watch your mailbox for the budget developed by the FMT, along with a brochure with photos reminding us what we've accomplished this past year despite Covid and what we hope to be able to accomplish as we move beyond it. This mailing will include a pledge card for you to commit to helping us realize our goals. Listen for various Teams' sharings during worship, leading up to mid-May pledge dedication and subsequent budget refinement by FMT for Leadership Council to consider passing on for approval at our Annual Meeting June 13.

### Job Postings for "Family Ministries and Faith Formation" and "Director of JR/SR High Youth Ministries"

"Minister of Spiritual Growth & Development" was Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel's title at BUCC. Her job amalgamated the two positions mentioned in this section's title. Job descriptions are being posted for these two positions which are included in the "dream budget."

### Covid Task Force Recommendation for Resuming in-person worship services at Bethlehem

At a special Leadership Council meeting earlier in the day I write this for tomorrow's Visitor deadline, Council approved a plan our Covid Task Force presented: a series of steps to return to worshipping together in our church. Originally, the plan had dates which really cannot yet be set: we aren't in a position to say when the first of these four steps can be executed. Michigan's current Covid situation makes this impossible.

As we progress toward further immunizations to herd immunity, Leadership Council will continue to confer (more frequently than once per month, as events warrant!)

This plan is being shared with all BUCC leadership in order to coordinate the many moving parts:

### Recommended Schedule for BUCC Re-opening

*The BUCC task force (Pastor John, Parish Administrator Julie Rhodes, Vice President Ron Dechert) is very aware of the sensitivity individuals have towards re-opening of church services, especially with the current environment in the state. The outline listed below is a recommended template for scheduling activities when a decision is made to move forward with resumed indoor, in-person worship.*

*This template is not inclusive of all tasks or group interactions needed to prepare and coordinate for in-person worship services in the future. It is intended for high-level planning and coordination and was approved by Leadership Council April 14, 2021.*

(continued on page 3)

*(continued from page 2)*

**Step 1: Resume 10am (Sanctuary) church services with sound system and radio broadcast**

**Restrictions:**

*No Fellowship or congregating inside the building. Could hold outdoor coffee hour.*

*No passing of the peace*

*No congregational or choir singing*

*No Sunday School activities*

*Mask must be worn by everyone above age 5 for entire time in the building or while in groups outdoors*

*Maintain social spacing for non-family units throughout service*

*Disinfect entire sanctuary and passageways after each event*

*Remove items that can be shared (bibles, hymnals, papers, pads, envelopes) from each pew*

**Step 2: Allow addition of choir and instruments (with mask) for 10am services**

*Restrictions: Same as above except for choir / instruments. Choir can resume practice 2 weeks prior to first Sunday. Singing is allowed. Choir practice should involve use of approved spaces providing proper social distancing. All practice activities must comply with proper mitigation steps. Congregational singing can resume with the start of the choir.*

**Step 3: Resume 8:30 service in Chapel**

*Restrictions: Same as above*

**Step 4: Resume indoor coffee/fellowship hours**

*Resume Sunday School activities*

*Restrictions: Final mitigation practices will be sent to the congregation before this step. We anticipate on-going need for face mask, social distancing, hand hygiene and disinfecting to continue.*

*Mapping out a tentative plan for re-opening is important at this juncture to allow for feedback from our ministry teams and church staff that would have to be engaged in these activities. In addition, adequate time needs to be allowed for communication with our congregation to set appropriate expectations for those who might choose to attend these services and activities.*

Peace,  
John Samford

## Still looking for a COVID-19 Vaccination?

Available appointments can be found at [www.vaccinefinder.org](http://www.vaccinefinder.org).

March 2021	Year to Date	YTD Target	2020/2021 Budget
<b>Offerings and Income</b>	\$367,332	\$348,715	\$418,458
<b>Expenses</b>	\$381,162	\$395,398	\$474,477
<b>Net</b>	(\$13,829)	(\$46,683)	(\$56,019)



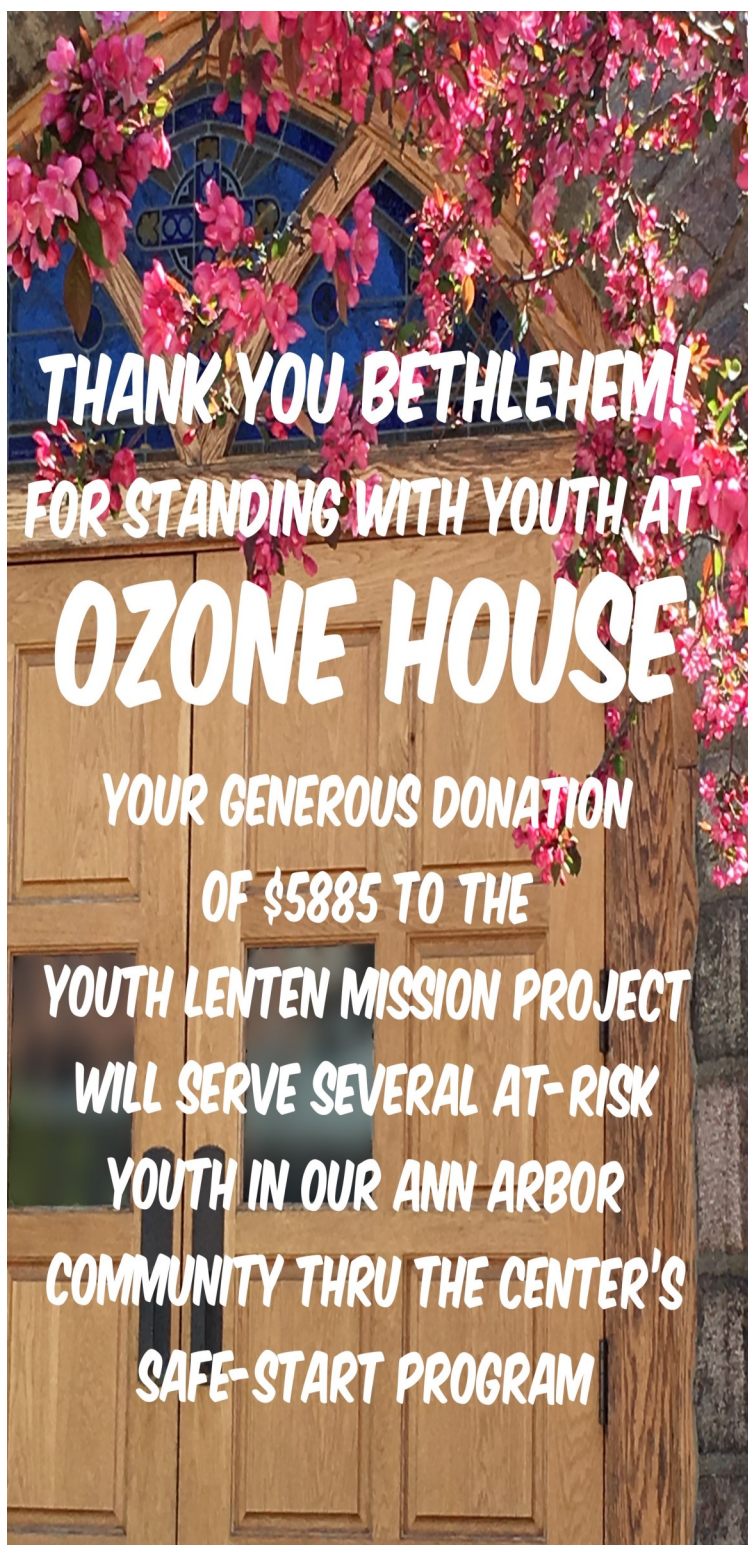
# EDUCATIONAL SCHOLARSHIPS

*The Bethlehem 2021-2022 Scholarship Application is available now on our website.*

*Deadline for filing is June 13.*

Members of Bethlehem are eligible to apply for educational scholarships. Application is open to any qualified member attending full-time at an accredited college or university, at the undergraduate or graduate level.

Application forms may be obtained by emailing: [parishadministrator@Bethlehem-ucc.org](mailto:parishadministrator@Bethlehem-ucc.org). They can also be downloaded from the website: [bethlehem-ucc.org](http://bethlehem-ucc.org).



## Celebrating Graduates

Bethlehem wants to do all we can to celebrate graduates this year! Graduate Recognition will be on Sunday, June 6 during 10:00 am worship service. Please email Eileen Koprowski [eckoprowski@gmail.com](mailto:eckoprowski@gmail.com), Education Ministry Chair, if there's a high school or college, undergrad or advanced degree graduate in your life no later than Monday, May 24, 2021.

Please include:

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

## Memorials and Gifts Gifts Received April 2021

### CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND

Norm & Helen Grob Memorial

### MUSIC FUND

Susanne Waltjen Memorial

### OZONE HOUSE FUND

Pastor Lily Tinker Fortel Honorarium

### PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

Bill Fellenberger Memorial

Hilda McLaughlin Memorial

### RADIO FUND

Eleanora Gardner Memorial

### GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND

Kennyon Edwards Memorial

Gifts listed were received through  
April 30, 2021

### Radio Sponsorship

4/11 - In Memory of Frederick & Lela Keppler

4/25 - In Memory of Hilda McLaughlin



## Outreach Ministry Team News

### There are many ways to help PNC, including this one.

Did you know that your grocery purchases can generate donations for Peace – at no additional cost to you? Kroger and Busch's both allow you to designate Peace Neighborhood Center to receive a percentage of your grocery bill when you use your Kroger Shopper's Card or Busch's MyWay Card.

If you want to help build bright futures for Peace youth, families, and adults every time you go grocery shopping, head to this Peace webpage for detailed instructions on how to sign up: <https://peaceneighborhoodcenter.org/grocery-rewards/>.



**Houses2Home helps many families, from Alpha House, transition into their own homes.**

Our client, from the morning, sent photos of her finished product. She was able to move everything in and decorate. So much of the work she got done, turning a house into a home. #Houses2Home



In addition to meal guests in our dining room, (average 500 meals per week), the Food Gatherers Community Kitchen has been preparing and distributing 1200-1500 "to-go" meals each week to feed the community for the last 13 months!

Pictured: Boxed "to-go" dinners ready to be distributed. Volunteers Valerie and Catherine prepare and package individual meals.



## Thank YOU, Volunteers!

I offer my heartfelt thanks to the dedicated volunteers who so generously help sustain Bethlehem church. In my role of administrator, I am especially grateful for the help of:



Dindy & Mike Haab  
John Irwin  
Karen & John Samford  
Jim Stadel

Tom Ziesemer & Facilities Team

And, thank you to everyone who offers their help!

Julie Rhodes, Parish Administrator

## Upper Room Devotional

The Upper Room has made their daily devotionals available as PDF for subscribing churches. You may access a PDF copy from the church website by clicking [here](#). The PDF can also be located at: [www.bethlehem-ucc.org](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org) under the events tab at the top of the page.



## 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](http://bethlehem-ucc.org) or leave a message at the church office (734) 665-6149 and someone will get back with you.

## 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](mailto:rowank55@gmail.com) to schedule at your convenience.



## 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:**  
**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