



# The Visitor

May 2022  
Bethlehem United Church of Christ

## Daily Transformation Becomes Resurrection

It was a special moment of resurrection on Easter Sunday 2022. For the first time in three years we celebrated in Bethlehem's beautiful sanctuary that Christ is risen! God is in ultimate control and wins the final victory. Each day, we rise we are overwhelmed by the forces of darkness and evil. Each day we are made aware all the things that exist in God's world that should not. We ask, "what can one person do to make a difference where cruelty, hunger, violence, racism, greed, and death seemed to hold the upper hand"? Jesus was only one man of flesh and blood and each and every disciple was only one mere person, weighed down by the struggle to provide and care for their families and community. When the disciples saw that with God, that all things are possible, they banded together to live in a way that modeled Jesus' life and teachings. They found a new freedom to live authentic lives patterned after all that Jesus taught them.

Even ole Saul or St Paul's life was changed so radically by meeting the resurrected Christ that he cast aside all of the other things in which he had placed his confidence. Thousands and later millions of lives were changed as followers began to put their faith in God and not the powers of the world. Paul instructed the new faith communities to live by a new code of love and compassion in a hostile world. Paul's share's a prescription transformation with his church in Rome (in Romans 12) and it goes like this; "Don't just pretend to love others. Really love them. Hate what is wrong. Hold tightly to what is good. Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other. Never be lazy, but work hard and serve the Lord enthusiastically. Rejoice in our confident hope. Be patient in trouble, and keep on praying. When God's people are in need, be ready to help them. Always be eager to practice hospitality. Bless those who persecute you. Don't curse them; pray that God will bless them. Be happy with those who are happy, and weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with each other. Don't be too proud to enjoy the company of ordinary people. And don't think you know it all! Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone. Dear friends, never take revenge. Leave that to the righteous anger of God. For the Scriptures say, "I will take revenge; I will pay them back," says the LORD. Instead, "If your enemies are hungry, feed them. If they are thirsty, give them something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals of shame on their heads." Do not let evil conquer you, but conquer evil by doing good.

Living each day in God's forgiveness, compassion, and mercy, while sharing forgiveness, compassion and mercy is true freedom and power for the journey for you and your family.

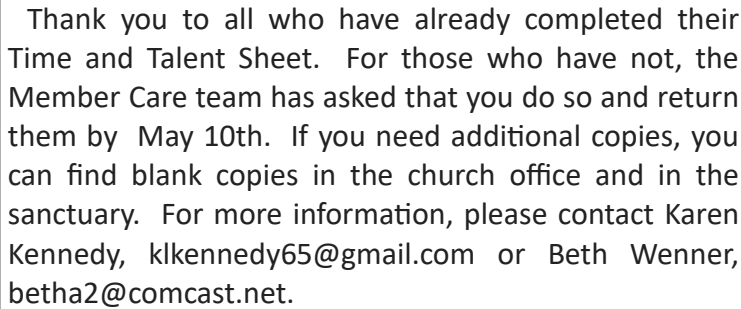
Christ is risen!  
Pastor John

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**Deadline for the  
June / July edition  
of the Visitor is  
Sunday, May 15**





## DETAILS TO COME AS AVAILABLE

deb ventura@bethlehem-ucc.org



March 2022	Year to Date	YTD Target	2020/2021 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$400,404	\$422,170	\$506,604
Expenses	\$388,215	\$445,143	\$534,171
Net	\$12,188	(\$22,973)	(\$27,567)

Women's Fellowship Board is sad to announce an end to the long-standing tradition of co-ordinating and serving Funeral Lunches for members of Bethlehem. The dwindling number of volunteers available to assist brought us to this conclusion.

We take pride in the many years we were able to provide this service and regret that it must come to an end. We salute the women, past and present, who made this possible.



### MEETING MINUTES

Minutes from all Ministry Team Meetings are due to the church office by the 1st of every month. Please

submit your May minutes by June 1 to:

**gwenda\_mayes@bethlehem-ucc.org**

Thank you all for your service to our church community.

## RADIO BROADCAST SUPPORT AND SPONSORSHIPS



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!*

1. **Pick a date you want to sponsor.**
2. **Sign up on the bulletin board in the office hallway, or call the office at 734-665-6149.**
3. **You can even donate online at [bethlehem-ucc.org](http://bethlehem-ucc.org).**
4. **Tell the office how you want your sponsorship listed in the bulletin and read on-air.**

## Memorials and Gifts Gifts Received from March 16 - April 15

### **CURRENT FUND**

Bill & Doris Niethammer Memorial  
Tony Peters Memorial

### **GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND**

Mary Lou Wenk Memorial

### **RADIO SPONSORSHIP**

March 20—In Memory of Bertha Nachtigal Hartley  
April 10—In Memory of Frederick & Lela Keppler

**Gifts listed were received through  
April 15, 2022**

## Support Bethlehem by Grocery Shopping!

You can help support Bethlehem when you buy your groceries at Busch's or Kroger. A portion of what you spend will be contributed to the church.

You'll need an account on each website which includes your phone number or alternate ID.

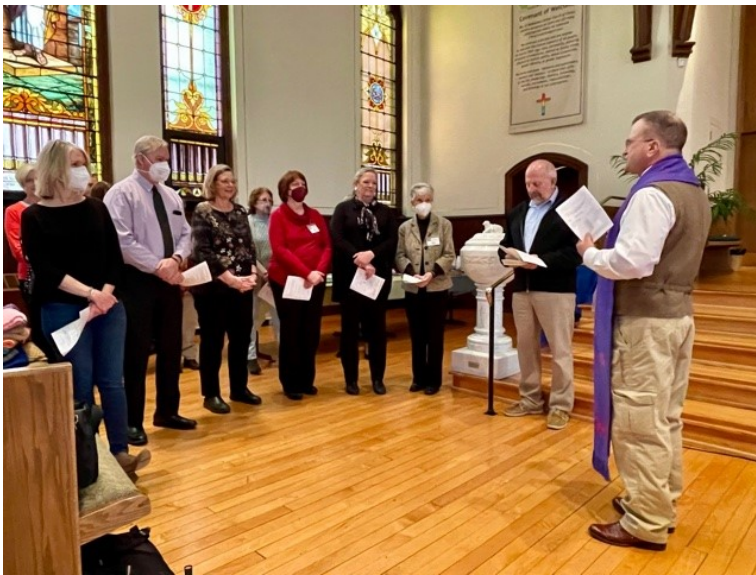
For Busch's - on [www.buschs.com](http://www.buschs.com) log into your account and select Cash for Education under your name. Enroll in the 2022 Cash for Education by clicking the dropdown to select "Bethlehem United Church of Christ". Make sure to check the box "Add to Future Quarters" to make sure Bethlehem gets credit all year long. Enrollment is required each January for Bethlehem to continue to receive funds. When you shop at Busch's, use your phone number or alternate ID at the register.

For Kroger - on [www.kroger.com](http://www.kroger.com) log into your account and select My Account under your name then Community Rewards. Find Bethlehem United Church of Christ and click Enroll.



Thank you to all who have signed up to help bring money to Bethlehem just by grocery shopping!

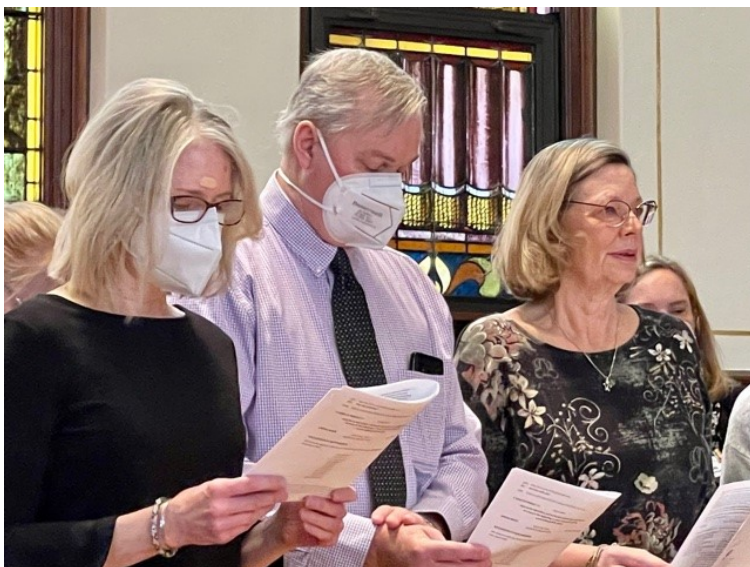




On April 10th, we welcomed with joy, eleven (11) members who have joined Bethlehem UCC since April 2020.

***Beth and Mike Wenner, Pete Hendershot, Kelly Williams, Dale and Dolly Bond, Nan Lefton, Ele Kotowski, Teresa Beagle, Anne Scott, and Nancy Nicholson\****

*\*unfortunately, we were not able to get everyone in the pictures.*





### Administrative Assistant to Pastor John

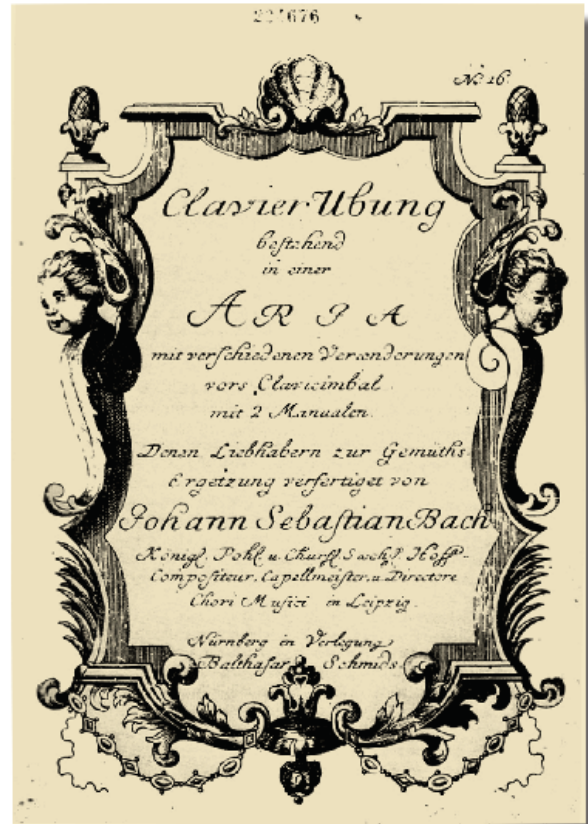
Bethlehem UCC would also like to welcome Debbie Ventura to our office staff. Debbie recently retired from the University of Michigan, Medical School, Department of Internal Medicine. She served as Senior Administrative Specialist for the department supporting the Chair and faculty. She looks forward to bringing her 23 years of experience to Bethlehem UCC supporting Pastor John with his many responsibilities and interfacing with the members of the church and its visitors.

Debbie and her husband live in Superior Township and loves living within 15 minutes of all of their children and grandchildren. Debbie's hobbies include baking, sewing and traveling. One of her favorite scripture verses is, "But as for me and my family, we will serve the Lord." Joshua 24:15



She looks forward to meeting all of you!

### GOLDBERG VARIATIONS JS BACH



May 7, 2022, Saturday at 4 PM

Bethlehem UCC 423 S. 4th Ave

### Gail & Andrew Jennings - Organ & Violin

During the dark days of the Pandemic Lockdown, learning and arranging the monumental *Golberg Variations* became a joyful project. In 1741 when the work was published, JS Bach wrote on the title page:

"Composed for the refreshment of one's spirit"

Originally written for harpsichord, this epic piece has been recorded many times on the piano. There are also arrangements for Harp, String Trio, Saxophone Quartet, Marimba, Jazz ensemble, and Accordion. Our performance is on Bethlehem's beautiful Casavant Organ and Andy joins (on the violin) for the nine canons and the humorous Quodlibet. Please join us!



### Get Involved

with Worship!

### Volunteers Needed

We need people to serve as liturgists, sound techs, and ushers now that we are back in-person. Please contact the office or people listed below for more information:

**Liturgist:** Jennifer Vasquez,

Email: jenniferavasquez29@gmail.com

**Sound Tech:** Gary Rogers,

Email: rogersg@courts.mi.gov

**Usher:** Jane Schmerberg,

Email: jmnmd@med.umich.edu

We are in need of Sunday morning volunteers to work in the church office. The volunteer would need to arrive at 9:30am and stay until the service is concluded. If interested, please contact Tom Ziesemer at ziesemertn@gmail.com.



# HAPPENINGS



- Sundays, Worship Service in-person and via live stream and radio broadcast (WAAM 1600 am) 10:00 am
- Mondays, Hand bell Rehearsal 6:00-7:00 pm, Choir Room
- Tuesdays, Roundtable Pulpit 12:00-1:00 pm via ZOOM

May 1 - Delonis Center, Food Gatherers volunteer day, 12:00 noon

May 4 - BUCculeles practice, Choir Room, 1:00 pm

May 5 - Youth Group, Youth Room, 6:30 pm

May 6 - Bethlehem Veterans & Friends Breakfast, Alpha Restaurant, 8:30 am

May 7 - Violin & Organ recital of Gail & Andrew Jennings, Sanctuary

May 10 - Facilities Ministry Team, Lounge, 3:30 pm

May 10 - Cemetery Board Mtg., Cemetery, 4:00 pm

May 11 - BUCculeles Practice, Choir Room, 6:00 pm

May 12 - Virtual Finance Ministry Team, 7:00 pm

May 17 - Worship Team, via ZOOM, 5:30 pm

May 18 - BUCculeles Practice, Choir Room, 1:00 pm

May 18 - Member Care Meeting, via ZOOM, 4:00 pm

May 19 - Youth Group, Youth Room, 6:30 pm

May 25 - BUCculeles Practice, Choir Room, 6:00 pm

May 26 - Leadership Council via ZOOM, 4:30 pm



## *Ukrainian Crisis Appeal*

The Outreach Ministry Team has been asked for information on the BUCC effort in response to the crisis in Ukraine. An on-going program to raise funds for this urgent need will be launched very soon following the conclusion of the congregational stewardship appeal. Watch for further information no later than late May or early June.

## New BUCculeles Schedule

The BUCculeles have begun in person jams! We'll meet in the Choir Room. Here's the upcoming schedule:

May 4, 1:00 PM

May 11, 6:00 PM

May 18, 1:00 PM

May 25, 6:00 PM

You are still welcome to join by zoom, just let Katie know in advance: [rowank55@gmail.com](mailto:rowank55@gmail.com)

Join Zoom Meeting

[https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71073058780?](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71073058780?pwd=bHBSbzdkNTBqTkFSWEN3b2hUL1lwUT09)  
[pwd=bHBSbzdkNTBqTkFSWEN3b2hUL1lwUT09](https://us04web.zoom.us/j/71073058780?pwd=bHBSbzdkNTBqTkFSWEN3b2hUL1lwUT09)

Meeting ID: 710 7305 8780

Passcode: X7E1dG



## Bethlehem Veterans' & Friends Monthly Breakfast

Friday, May 6 at 8:30 am

Friday, June 3 at 8:30 am

Alpha Restaurant, Jackson Rd.  
(formerly Classic Cup Café)

Questions? Contact Tom Ziesemer

Email: [ziesemertn@gmail.com](mailto:ziesemertn@gmail.com)



## Roundtable Pulpit

All are invited to participate in a "Roundtable Pulpit" with Pastor John on Tuesdays from 12-1:00 pm via **ZOOM**. Gather to study and discuss the coming week's scripture. Please click on the link above if you would like to participate.



**REMINDER!!!**

May 15th is the deadline for items to be included in the **June/July edition** of the VISITOR newsletter. As this newsletter will be covering two months, please plan ahead for any items to be included through July.

Please email submissions to:

deb\_ventura@bethlehem-ucc.org



There are many opportunities for you to donate flowers yet this year to beautify the sanctuary. If you are interested, please sign up either on the board in the hallway in front of the office or by SignUp Genius. If you have questions, please contact Gwen Mayes.

## Free Tutoring for Adults



At the Washtenaw Literacy Learning Center

Call 734-337-3336 to sign up for a tutoring time.

You must make an appointment before coming to the Learning Center.

☆ Due to COVID, all tutors and learners at the Center must be fully vaccinated and current on boosters ☆

**Free Tutoring**

Reading  
Writing  
Math  
Computer Skills  
Speaking English  
GED  
Work Skills

Located in the  
Community Family Life Center  
1375 S Harris Rd, Ypsilanti

**Tutoring Hours  
by Appointment  
Only**

Monday afternoons  
Thursday afternoons  
Fridays



## OUR FOOD BARREL IS HUNGRY

Our Food Gatherers barrel for nonperishables is located in the library. Please remember to gather extras each time you shop. Items most in need are soup, canned meat or vegetables, pasta, beans, rice, cereal, granola bars, peanut butter, jelly, baby food, formula, diapers, and toiletries. **\*\*\*PLEASE NO GLASS CONTAINERS\*\*\***



# LIVE STREAMING

We are now live streaming our 10:00 am Worship Service on Sundays. You can click the link [HERE](#) to be taken directly to the BUCC website so that you can watch services.



**BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
423 S. Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor, Michigan 48104  
Phone 734-665-6149 Fax 734-665-3399  
[www.bethlehem-ucc.org](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org)  
[www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2](https://www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2)



## Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday  
9:30 am - 2:30 pm  
(the office is closed on Mondays)



# OUTREACH MINISTRY TEAM

## Rotating Shelter Program - March 14-20, 2022



Bethlehem Church believes  
*"Whoever you are and wherever  
 you are on life's journey,  
 You are welcome here."*

In conjunction with the Ann Arbor Shelter Association, Bethlehem participated in sheltering approximately 24 men per evening in our building. The men slept on pallets in the Gallery and the Library, while the volunteer overnight hosts stayed in the Schmale Lounge. There were 3-4 volunteer hosts per night. The men were greeted each evening with coffee/tea/hot chocolate and snack bars. Bethlehem was one of a dozen other area churches taking part this year.

We want to thank the Leadership Council for endorsing this endeavor. The following ministry teams sought volunteers to provide hosting for one evening per team. Those teams were Facilities, Education, Leadership Council, Outreach, Young Adults, and ONA (Open and Affirming). In order to secure enough volunteer hosts, we are grateful for Church of the Good Shepherd stepping up by providing four volunteers.

We would like to thank the following persons who stayed overnight as hosts: Joe Eadie, Sue Wortman, Roy Muir, Tom Ziesemer, John Irwin, Mike Haab, Jim Rowan, Ron Dechert, Pete Hendershot, Stefani Crouse, Ellie Vasquez, Eleanore Sculati, Jane Schmerberg, Eileen Koprowski, Vicki Hoxie, Jesse Wilcox, Mary Beth Damm, Marty Seyfried, Mary Pratt, Corky Peck, Jennifer Vasquez, Cresson Sloten, Kurt Schmerberg, Nan Lefton.

We also want to thank Tom Ziesemer, Jim Stadel, and the cleaning crew at Bethlehem for the extra time spent with set ups and additional cleaning.

We are delighted that Bethlehem was able to be part of the Rotating Shelter Program this year, after not participating in it for several years. We hope that our congregation continues to support this important outreach for our community.

Roy Muir, Sue Muir, Mary Jean Raab  
 Co-Chairs of Bethlehem's Rotating Shelter Program 2022







## 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

<u>STAFF</u>	<u>MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRS</u>	<u>LEADERSHIP COUNCIL</u>
Pastor: Rev. John Kennedy	Finance: Karen Samford	President: Ron Dechert
Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Orval L.E. Willimann	Facilities: Steve Darr	Vice President: Jim Rowan
Minister of Spiritual Growth and Development:	Education: Eileen Koprowski	Secretary: Rachel Hemp
Financial Administrator: Betty Clark	Worship: Jennifer Vasquez	Treasurer: Pete Hendershot
Office Supervisor: Gwenda Mayes	Member Care: Beth Wenner (co-chair)	At-Large Members:
Administrative Assistant: Debbie Ventura	Karen Kennedy (co-chair)	Dindy Haab
Director of Music: David Hahn	Welcome: Jane Schmerberg	Pat Huibregtse
Organist: Gail Jennings	Outreach: Sue Muir/Roy Muir	Pam Rutledge
Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan	Fellowship: Jan Eadie	Ex Officio: Rev. John Kennedy
Video Director: Dan Blakeney	Youth & Young Adult: Katie Rowan	
Sunday School Nursery Teacher:	Bethlehem Cemetery: Marty Seyfried	
	Nominations Committee: Cresson Slotten	