

The Visitor

April 2023
Bethlehem United Church of Christ

***'The meaning of life is to find your gift.
The purpose of life is to give it away.'* Pablo Picasso**

Each and every one of us has a gift, that something we do so well. Often times it is hidden from our view and the view of those closest to us. Several years ago I worked in leadership development at Oakwood Hospital. At one of my seminars, a doctor shared the following experience about discovering a gift. (I have changed the names for anonymity.)



Dr. Joe's son, 14-year-old Ray, was born with down's syndrome. When Dr. Joe looked at Ray, he saw a boy who would never play ball, never go to college, never be like all the other kids; all he noticed and focused on were the things Ray couldn't do. He saw him as handicapped.

Ray was invited to a youth retreat and Dr. Joe went along as a chaperone as he didn't think Ray should go without a parent present. One evening all the kids and leaders were sitting around the campfire and they were going to do an exercise where they told each person in the circle why he/she was special. Dr. Joe was wary of this activity and worried about what the kids would say about Ray. As each child came to Ray, Dr. Joe heard his son described as touched by the Holy Spirit, spirit filled, filled with love for others, selfless, and kind.

Dr. Joe realized then that his son was his gift of love and his son had the gift of showing others, including himself, the Holy Spirit at work on earth. Dr. Joe had put his son in a handicapped box that always found him failing - he was shown a new and different Ray through other peoples eyes; a Ray of love and hope with possibilities for his future. He treated Ray much differently from that day on.

Often we find our gift(s) when we hear from other people. Have you found the meaning of your life in your gift? Have you found the purpose of your life as you give your gift away? What about us together as Bethlehem United Church of Christ? Have we discovered our collective gifts as people following Jesus Christ in Ann Arbor, Michigan? How do we give this gift away? I ask each of you to pray for discernment. And I ask for your prayers too as we move forward together at this time.

Blessings,
Pastor Diane



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Palm Sunday, April 2 @ 10:00AM – We will celebrate with the Cantata Love Divine by Joel Raney. Rev. Dr. Robert Livingston will feature as Narrator, and our Chancel Choir will include an instrumental ensemble. This will be the focus of the worship service with communion added in. You will not want to miss this spiritual experience as you begin Holy Week. After worship we will join for a time of treats and fellowship as our Education Ministry Team offer an opportunity to contribute to the Sunday School Lenten Project: Doctors Without Borders.

Maundy Thursday, April 6 @ 6:00PM – Come celebrate the last supper with us, and join us in the Fellowship Hall for a soup, bread, and dessert meal. This special day is also marked with a German pretzel and grape communion. Interested? Join us and hear about what went on in that upper room so long ago from someone who was there! Please let us know if you are planning to attend so we are sure to have plenty – call the church office at 734-665-6149, or email the church office at: churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org

Good Friday, April 7 @12:00PM and 7:30PM in the Sanctuary – Our Good Friday services will be two completely different services; however, the opportunity to experience the Stations of the Cross will take place at both. The 7:30PM service will also include the Tenebrae Service and music by Andy and Gail Jennings and P.J Lindemann (P.J. will also be singing at the noon service).

Easter Sunday, April 9 - Christ is Risen! We celebrate with Words and music. A brass quintet will begin playing at 9:45AM as a prelude to our Easter Worship. Join in singing your favorite hymns of Christ the Lord is Risen Today and Thine is the Glory and hear a special rendition of Crown

Him With Many Crowns by the Chancel Choir. Come forward to join the choir and the quintet as we praise God with the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel’s Messiah at the close of worship (music will be provided). Pastor Diane is working on her message titled “Mercy in the Open Tomb.”



February, 2023	Year to Date	YTD Target	22 /23 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$265,588	\$300,015	\$400,020
Expenses	\$374,751	\$400,596	\$534,128
Net	(\$109,163)	(\$100,581)	(\$134,108)

The Youth attended the Wisconsin/Michigan Men's Basketball game in February. We had a great time and were happy to witness an exciting win!



Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received February 15 – March 15, 2023

**CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND
John Nimz Memorial**

**PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND
Wilbert & Betty Diuble Memorial**

Radio Sponsorship

**Gifts listed were received through
March 15, 2023**



Call for College Student Addresses

The BUCC Youth will again be sending out College Care Cards to College students as they finish up the semester

Please send your student's mailing address to rowank55@gmail.com

Please indicate if there is an end date that the address will be not be current.



Bethlehem Volunteer Day for Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley



Bethlehem's Volunteer Day for our local Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley will be

Saturday, May 20, 9:00 - 3:00

We will be working on a house in Ypsilanti. Please contact Katie if you are interested in

helping: rowank55@gmail.com

You can also support this effort with your donations designated for **Habitat Huron Valley**. In addition, we are looking for an individual or group that could supply lunch for 10 people to be delivered to the worksite.

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*****



Pastor John's Farewell

We wish
YOU
all the
BEST



BUCC FELLOWSHIP

BUCCuleles

Congregational Sing-A-Long scheduled for
Sunday, April 23rd immediately following the
10:00 am service.



Bethlehem Cemetery

Spring clean-up will begin on
April 1.

Any Christmas decorations you do not want discarded, please remove before April 1. Extra effort is needed to cleanup following the recent ice storms, so please help us get the cemetery ready for spring.



HOMEBOUND FRIENDS



We have many dear friends who remain home-bound and they would love to see you and/or hear from you.

If you would like names and contact information, please reach out to Pastor Diane who can share that with you.

WARNING
 DUE DATES ARE CLOSER
 THAN THEY APPEAR

Please make sure that the office receives all
Refrigerator Page and Email Blast
 submissions by
9 am Thursday each week.
April 15 is the deadline for items to be
 included in the May edition of the VISITOR
 newsletter.

Please email submissions to:

churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org



MEETING
 MINUTES

Minutes from all Ministry
 Team Meetings are due to
 Gwen by the 1st of every

month at:

gwenda_mayes@bethlehem-ucc.org

Thank you all for your service to our church
 community.



BETHLEHEM CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

LOCATED AT: 2801 JACKSON AVENUE, ANN ARBOR, MI 48103

PHONE: 734-761-6878 (VOICE MAIL)

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE: BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
 423 S. 4TH AVENUE, ANN ARBOR, MI 48104

PHONE: 734-665-6149



HAPPENINGS



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

Aimee in the church office at: churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org



REMINDER!!!

April 15 is the deadline for items to be included in the **May** edition of the VISITOR newsletter.

Please email submissions to:

churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org

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.**
4. **Tell the office how you want your sponsorship listed in the bulletin and read on-air.**



April 1

- Chancel Choir Dress Rehearsal, Sanctuary, 2:00 pm

April 2 Palm/Communion Sunday

- Musician's Green Rm, Lounge 9:00 am
- Worship Team Mtg., Library 11:00 am
- Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall 11:15 am
- Youth Group, Youth Rm., 11:30 am

April 3

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir RM, 6:00 pm

April 5

- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 noon
- Member Care Ministry Mtg., Lounge, 4:00 pm

April 6 Maundy Thursday/Communion

- Maundy Thursday Service, Fellowship Hall 6:00 pm

April 7 Good Friday

- Bethlehem Veteran's Breakfast, Alpha Koney, 8:30 am
- Good Friday Service, Sanctuary 12:00 pm
- Good Friday Service, Sanctuary 7:30 pm

April 8

- Easter Rehearsal, Sanctuary 1:00 pm

April 9 - Easter/Communion

- Musician's Green Rm., Lounge 9:00 am

April 10

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir RM, 6:00 pm

April 11

- Bethlehem Ladies Breakfast, Alpha Koney, 9:30 am
- Facilities Ministry Team Mtg., Lounge, 3:30 pm

April 12

- Cemetery Board Mtg., Cemetery 9:30 am
- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 noon
- Choir Practice, Choir RM, 7:00 pm

April 16

- Habitat Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall 11:15 am
- Youth Group, Youth Rm., 11:30 am

April 17

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir RM, 6:00 pm

April 19

- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 noon
- Member Care Ministry, Lounge, 4:00 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir RM, 7:00 pm

April 22

- Holy Rollers, Kitchen/Fellowship Hall, 8:00 am

April 23

- Congregational Sing-A-Long, Sanctuary, 11:20 am

April 24

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir RM, 6:00 pm

April 26

- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 noon
- Choir Practice, Choir RM, 7:00 pm

April 27

- Leadership Council, Lounge, 6:00 pm
- Brecon Worship, Brecon Village 10:00 am

April 30

- Habitat Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall, 11:15 am
- Youth Group, Youth Rm, 11:30 am

OUTREACH NEWS

Outreach Ministry Team - Bethlehem United Church of Christ

CROP Walk 2022

Final figures for CROP Walk 2022 are in. Overall, the Ann Arbor Walk on Sunday, October 9 raised a grand total of \$35,284!

The 3 top fundraising groups were as follows:

1st Place: Zion Lutheran Church - \$6,276

2nd Place: Ann Arbor Christian Reformed - \$4,208

3rd Place: Bethlehem United Church of Christ - \$3,695



We are getting closer to our goal of raising \$10,000 for the Ukrainian Crisis Relief Fund.

To date we have received a total of \$7,745.

We are only \$2,255 from reaching our goal!

Donate online on our church website's Ukraine Crisis Fund: www.bethlehem-ucc.org

Checks are also welcome made out to Bethlehem United Church of Christ -

Please consider making a gift to this important outreach needed in Ukraine.

Education & Youth Ministry Teams
2023 Lenten Project: Doctors Without Borders

This organization delivers medical care, free of charge, in over 70 countries. Doctors are currently treating those injured in the Ukraine and in the earthquake damaged areas of Turkey and Syria.

Additional information about the Lenten Project is in this Visitor.



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
www.facebook.com/bethlehemuccA2

Office Hours

Tuesday - Friday
 9:00 am - 2:00 pm
*(the office is closed
 on Mondays)*

Staff E-Mail Addresses

The following is a list of our current staff at Bethlehem and their email addresses. Please utilize these email addresses for all communications.

Diane White Associate Pastor of Pastoral Ministry
 pastordiane@bethlehem-ucc.org

Naki Kripfgans Dir. of Music Ministry
 musicdirector@Bethlehem-ucc.org

Gail Jennings Organist
 gailpiano@yahoo.com

Jim Rowan Hand Bell Director
 jrowan@umich.edu

Gwenda Mayes Office Supervisor
 parishadministrator@bethlehem-ucc.org

Aimee Winchester Administrative Assistant
 churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org

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:
 Assoc. Pastor: Diane White
 Pastor Emeritus: Rev. Orval L.E. Willimann
 Office Supervisor: Gwenda Mayes
 Administrative Assistant: Aimee Winchester
 Director of Music: Naki Kripfgans
 Organist: Gail Jennings
 Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan
 Video Director: Dan Blakeney
 Maintenance Personnel: Bill Husted

MINISTRY TEAM CHAIRS

Finance: Tom Krell
 Facilities: Steve Darr
 Education: Eileen Koprowski
 Worship: Jennifer Vasquez
 Member Care: Beth Wenner
 Welcome: Jane Schmerberg
 Outreach: Sue Muir/Roy Muir
 Fellowship:
 Youth & Young Adult: Katie Rowan
 Bethlehem Cemetery: Sue Buday
 Nominations Committee:

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

President: Ron Dechert
 Vice President: Jim Rowan
 Secretary: P.J. Lindemann
 Treasurer: Pete Hendershot
 At-Large Members:
 Dindy Haab
 Pat Huibregtse
 Barbara Schenk
 Ex Officio: