

The Visitor

October 2023
Bethlehem United Church of Christ



"I ask not only on behalf of these, but also on behalf of those who will believe in me through their word, that they may all be one." (John 17:20-21)

And just how do we become one? ... to be one in Christ, one in community, one body with many different parts, ideas, hopes, and dreams working toward our common goal and future? It is possible, you know. But it takes very intentional work to make it happen. Ugh – that sounds dull and boring, doesn't it? Ah, but it doesn't have to be drudgery. It begins with all of us getting to know one another, getting to know one another better, and perhaps becoming reacquainted with one another in new ways. Then and only then can we work together as a cohesive, collaborative community of faith toward common goals and a common vision.

You might think, 'Poppycock! We've been together for years. We already know each other.' Maybe so. Yet, we are all a work in progress. Each of us is affected and influenced by life's circumstances and experiences. And apart from our spouses/life partners, no one else knows us inside and out. For me, being new to this community, I long to get to know you. It is absolutely essential that I get to know you, individually and collectively. It is also essential for me to hear about your joys and sorrows, your fears and passions, your needs, and your gifts, and so much more. This type of sharing helps lay the foundation for our transitional work together. Let's make that foundation solid!

Rogers and Hammerstein captured it well, in their musical, *The King and I*, with this song: *"Getting to know you, getting to know all about you. Getting to like you, getting to hope you like me. Getting to know you, putting it my way, but nicely, you are precisely, my cup of tea. ... Haven't you noticed suddenly I'm bright and breezy? Because of all the beautiful and new things, I'm learning about you day by day."* Let's be intentional about this, to really kick-start our transitional process together!

I have set aside time weekly, in September, October, and into November, for "Getting to Know You" small group gatherings, 90 minutes each. Here is the [LINK](#) for you to sign up for one of those fun sessions. Click on the link to open the google document and simply type your name into one of the open spots. You may also call or email the office and ask Gwen or Aimee to enter your name. I've scheduled all of these meetings in the Schmale Lounge. However, if you'd like to make it a little more-cozy for us, you may volunteer to host one of the sessions in your home. Just let me know well in advance so that we can provide the location details to everyone attending.

If some of you simply can't meet in-person, due to schedules, health, or migration south for the winter, I'm happy to schedule a group zoom meeting or speak with you individually over the phone. Let me know! My goal is to include absolutely everyone.

Let's get to know one another in the coming weeks, so "that they [we] may all be one" in this community of Christ. See you soon!

Pastor Dawn

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Bethlehem Chancel Choir has started another exciting year this week. Without any doubt, the main source and powerful inspiration of Bethlehem Chancel Choir and our Music Ministry at Bethlehem are our invaluable VOLUNTEER members! At the same time, we also want to welcome the UM student section leaders who will help us and share their beautiful talents in worship. Please, meet our section leader/soloists for this year!

Megan Gottfried (soprano section leader)

"Hi! My name is Megan Gottfried and I am the soprano section leader. I grew up here in Ann Arbor, and am currently a freshman studying Industrial Engineering in the College of Engineering at Michigan. I love singing, and have been in choir since third grade. I went to St. Francis for elementary and middle school, and traveled with their choir to Spain in 2018 for the International Pueri Cantores festival. I sang all through high school at Pioneer, and was lucky enough to perform at the All State Festival in Lansing twice with the A Capella choir.

I also took voice lessons, got to perform a duet at the Concerto Concert and at the All State Festival. Outside of classical singing, I am a huge musical theatre fan and performed in musicals at Pioneer. My other hobbies include reading, swimming, longboarding, hiking, biking, and eating. I love to explore restaurants around town with my parents and younger sister. I stay pretty busy, but singing is always a big part of my life and I'm honored to be a part of the Bethlehem United Church of Christ Choir!"

Veronica Kozirowski (co - alto section leader)

"I am from the Novi area, Michigan. I am a BM Voice Performance major minoring in Business. I like to read and shop."

Caitlyn Bogart (co - alto section leader)

"My name is Caitlyn Bogart and I am a junior voice performance major from Dallas, TX. This is my second year singing at BUCC, but this year I am singing part-time. I am currently singing with the Jazz Ensemble/Lab Band at UMich and just started a trio that is looking forward to playing around A2. Last weekend I sang at the Detroit Jazz Festival, and earlier this summer had the opportunity to work for the Jazz Institute at MPulse. Additionally, this summer I worked for Wolverine Pathways as a counselor for their theater camp and will be continuing with the curriculum this fall teaching middle schoolers about theater from the greater Detroit area. I am the music director for the spring MUSKET show Catch Me If You Can and will be conducting a full band for the first time. I'm grateful to be back at BUCC and sing with you all again! <3"

Henry Crater (tenor section leader)

"Originally from Sanibel Island, FL, Henry Crater is currently pursuing his BFA in Musical Theatre at the University of Michigan with a minor in Computer Science and a minor in MT Composition. Henry recently played Jesse in Tuck Everlasting at Hope Repertory Theatre in Holland, MI. Other recent productions include RENT and Fiddler On The Roof (University of Michigan). A winner of the American Theatre Wing's 2020 Songwriting Challenge, Henry is also a composer and lyricist. You can listen to his music on all streaming platforms. His original musical Einstein of Love was produced with Blank Space Workshop in Spring 2022."

Choir rehearsal convenes on Wednesdays, at 7 p.m.

Current Fiscal Year

August, 2023	Year to Date	YTD Target	23 /24 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$30,109	\$97,843	\$391,370
Expenses	\$34,443	\$120,889	\$483,556
Net	(\$4,334)	(23,047)	(\$92,186)

BUCC HAPPENINGS



October 1, Communion Sunday

- Sunday School, during Worship
- Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall, 11:15 am

September 2

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

October 4

- Getting to know you, Lounge, 10:00 am
- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 2:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 5:30 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 7:00 pm

October 6

- Bethlehem Veterans & Friends Monthly Breakfast, Alpha Koney, 8:30 am

October 8

- Sunday School, during Worship
- Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall, 11:15 am

October 9

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

October 10

- Bethlehem Ladies Breakfast, Alpha Koney, 9:30 am

October 11

- Cemetery Board Mtg., Cemetery, 9:30 am
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 10:00 am
- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 2:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 5:30 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 7:00 pm

October 14

- U of M Football vs Indiana, Parking at BUCC, TBD

October 15

- Crop Walk, Zion Lutheran Church
- Sunday School, during Worship
- Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall, 11:15 am

October 16

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

October 17

- Facilities Ministry Team, Lounge, 3:30 pm

October 18

- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Member Care Ministry Mtg., Lounge 4:00 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 7:00 pm

October 19

- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 10:00 am
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 2:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 5:30 pm

October 21

- Basket Weaving, Fellowship Hall, 9:00 am

October 22

- Sunday School, during Worship
- Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall, 11:15 am

October 23

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm 6:00 pm

October 25

- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 10:00 am
- Busy Christian Hands, Schmale Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 2:00 pm
- Getting to Know You, Lounge, 5:30 pm,
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 7:00 pm

October 26

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

October 29

- Sunday School, during Worship
- Coffee Hour, Fellowship Hall, 11:15 am

October 30

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm., 6:00 pm



Youth Group Kick Off

All Youth grades 6 -12 are invited to attend the Youth Group Kick Off on Sunday, September 24, 1-3 PM.

This will be held at the Schmerberg's local lake cottage. There will be swimming, canoeing, food and more! Youth are encouraged to bring their families. Contact Katie for directions to the cottage: rowank55@gmail.com



Sign-up to Serve for Coffee Fellowship

What better way to enjoy the company of your fellow church members than over a good cup of coffee? We are looking for two volunteers a week to adopt-a-coffee hour on Sundays after the 10:00 am worship service in the Fellowship Hall. Volunteers will need to set up, make coffee and clean up. Please click the link [HERE](#) to be taken to the Sign Up Genius website where you can choose your slot. Your willingness to participate in this act of fellowship is sincerely appreciated.

WARNING
DUE DATES ARE CLOSER
THAN THEY APPEAR

Please make sure that the office receives all [Refrigerator Page](#) and [Email Blast](#) submissions by 12:00 pm Wednesday each week. October 15 is the deadline for items to be included in the November 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:

parishadministrator@bethlehem-ucc.org

Thank you all for your service to our church community.

CROP Walk

This year's CROP walk is on Sunday October 15 and will be hosted by Zion Lutheran Church. You are welcome to join the Bethlehem team, the Pllamas. Sign up is on the CROP Walk website here: [CROP Walk Sign Up](#) Packets are also available in the church office. You can also donate via the Bethlehem website donation page on the CROP walk line item.



On August 27th from noon until 2:00 pm the Cemetery Board held an open house at the cemetery. The weather was wonderful for those who came out and walked around the cemetery to see the improvements we have made this year.

The roads have all been upgraded and we are working on removing storm damaged trees. The maintenance crew that mows the grass and generally takes care of the grounds is doing a great job, and the cemetery is a beautiful, peaceful, and serene place for the final interment of our loved ones. At the open house we had a video that John Schmale and Fritz Port filmed with a short history of the beginning of the church in 1833 and they read the scriptures that were used by Pastor Friedrich Schmidt at the very first church service. John read the scriptures in English and Fritz read the same scriptures in German. We also gave out roses to everyone who attended to lay on a family member's grave or to just take home with them if they preferred. There were also wreaths on the graves of past Bethlehem pastors who are buried in our cemetery. The Cemetery Board members were on hand to answer any questions and to help locate specific graves if needed. It turned out to be a meaningful and informative day for everyone who attended.



Board members pictured left to right.
Jim Lutz, Susan Irwin, Jamie Dylenski,
Shannon O'Reilly, Mary Friend, Mary Jean Raab

Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received August 16 - September 15

GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND
Roger Hoxie Memorial

PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT
John Nimz Memorial
Matilda O'Reilly Memorial



49th Annual Ann Arbor Area CROP Hunger Walk Sunday, October 15, 2023

Every fall since 1975, Washtenaw / Ann Arbor congregations and organizations have walked together with a common mission: to help the hungry and impoverished here and throughout the world with leadership from Church World Service [CWS].

The 2022 Walk raised a total of \$35,284.35 which beat our goal of \$35,000. This year we hope for at least 25 participating congregations and organizations, with a goal of \$40,000.



Zion Lutheran Church (1501 West Liberty, Ann Arbor) has kindly agreed again to host the **2023 Ann Arbor Area CROP Hunger Walk**. Registration starts at 1 PM with group outdoor send-off at 2 pm, or you can walk virtually in your own neighborhood.

Food provided outside at Zion Lutheran Church by [fedupministries.org](https://www.fedupministries.org)!

Mark your calendars: Sunday, Oct. 15, 2023

Visit our website:

www.crophungerwalk.org/AnnArborMI
www.facebook.com/annarborecrophungerwalk

Many small gifts make a BIG difference!

2023 CROP TEAM CO-CHAIRS

Mary Pratt

Bryan Weinert

Zion Lutheran Church

Hosts:

Pastor Anna Taylor-McCants+

Bryan Weinert

Treasurer:

Patti Yonka

Route Co-Chairs:

Jen Chapin-Smith

Alex Nemmers

Members:

Barb Fichtenberg

Sue Muir

Donald MacGregor

Rodger Wolff

Charles Yonka

CWS Co-Ordinator:

Andrew Gifford

Benefiting: 75% goes to CWS national/international communities.

25% of funds will go to: Saline Area Social Service, Breakfast Program @ St. Andrew's, Peace Neighborhood Center, Aid in Milan, Hope Clinic, Love Thy Neighbor FUMCAA, Community Action Network, FedUp Ministries, Growing Hope, Packard Health, SOS Community Services

CONTACT:

m.pratt33@yahoo.com

734-975-5310

SAVE THESE DATES:

Drive-thru Recruiter Fair at Zion Lutheran on **Wednesday, Sept. 6, 2023 from 5 to 7 PM**

Virtual Recruiter Training, **Sept. 7, 2023 @ 7PM**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82230365880>

Meeting ID: 822 3036 5880

Virtual Local Agency Roundtable, **Sept. 11, 2023 @ 12 Noon** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86363315162>

Meeting ID: 863 6331 5162



Partnership

Under one roof.

2023 IMPACT REPORT



House of Faith



This year Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley was proud to celebrate the closing of our 275th home. Since our first build in 1989, we have worked to ensure we make a meaningful impact on affordable homeownership in Washtenaw County.

In this difficult housing market, we concentrate our resources where they will have the greatest impact. Habitat's work goes beyond building homes; we are securing futures through our Home Improvement Program and Community Development efforts. We work to keep people in their homes and able to pass those homes on.

With your support we see the prosperity that *changes lives, secures futures, and strengthens communities.*

GIVING REPORT

In 2023, House of Faith congregations helped support the renovation of the Desoto Home with 400+ volunteer hours and funding, as well as volunteer support at the Campbell Home!



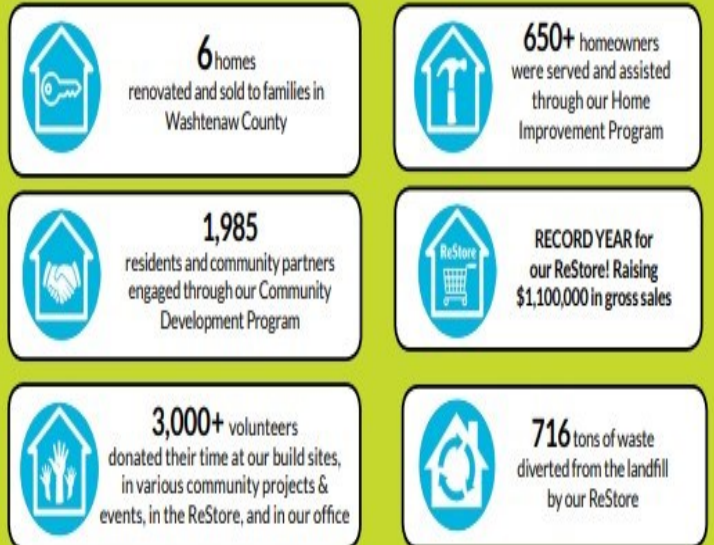
"Growing up, I always knew that owning a home would be the ultimate American dream for me... I look forward to the many ups and downs of homeownership for years to come."

-Wendy Alfaro-Cruz,
2023 Habitat Homeowner



FY 23 BY THE NUMBERS

(July 1, 2023 - June 30, 2024)



WHY HABITAT?

We remain committed to improving the lives of as many families and individuals as possible. Habitat's work goes beyond building homes; we are securing futures through our Home Improvement Program and Community Development efforts. This work immediately improves the safety, health and well-being of homeowners, dramatically boosting their education and economic advances long term and from one generation to the next.

This year we celebrate our impact, as we commemorate:

- 20 Years of Leadership from CEO Sarah Stanton
- 10 Years of our Home Improvement Program
- Completion of our 10,000 Home Improvement Project

**Building homes. Securing futures.
Strengthening communities.**



Sharese Patterson and her family at her Home Dedication



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.

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Rev. Dawn Christenson | Interim Pastor |
| revdawnchristenson@gmail.com | |
| Rev. Diane White | Associate Pastor |
| pastordiane@bethlehem-ucc.org | |
| Naki Kripfgans | Music Director / Organist |
| musicdirector@bethlehem-ucc.org | |
| Gwenda Mayes | Office Supervisor |
| parishadministrator@bethlehem-ucc.org | |
| Jim Rowan | Hand Bell Director |
| jrowan@umich.edu | |
| 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

Interim Pastor: Rev. Dawn Christenson
 Assoc. Pastor: Rev. Diane White
 Office Supervisor: Gwenda Mayes
 Admin. Assistant: Aimee Winchester
 Director of Music/Organist: Dr. Naki Kripfgans
 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: Open Position
 Member Care: Judy Coucouvanis
 Jenny Foster
 Welcome: Jane Schmerberg
 Outreach: Open Position
 Fellowship: Open Position
 Youth & Young Adult: Katie Rowan
 Bethlehem Cemetery: Mary Jean Raab
 Nominations Committee: Open Position

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

President: Ron Dechert
 Vice President: Jim Rowan
 Secretary: Barbara Schenk
 Treasurer: P.J. Lindemann
 At-Large Members:
 Dindy Haab
 Pat Huijbregtse
 Ex Officio: Rev. Dawn Christenson