

# The Visitor

## April 2024

### Bethlehem United Church of Christ

April Newsletter – Pastor Dawn



#### Easter blessings, beloved ones!

My apologies for being too ill to put anything in the March Visitor. I appreciate all of your prayers for my recovery. Keep them coming, please! COVID is still impacting my cognitive function and energy level. And many, many thanks to Pastor Diane for stepping up at a moment's notice to preach and continuing to do so while I was still testing positive!

Alas, my illness put a damper on our newly formed Ad hoc Bylaws Committee. That committee consists of Ron Dechert, PJ Lindemann, Kurt Schmerberg, and me. We missed multiple meetings because of COVID, but we resumed our activity the middle of March. We look forward to our work together, sharing it with you, and receiving input from you. For now, I am happy to share our preliminary information with you.

First, we established a Covenantal Agreement for our work together:

#### OUR COVENANT Agreement

**We will . . .**

**O = OFFER** the best of ourselves and **OPEN** ourselves to the Spirit

**U =** seek **UNDERSTANDING** and foster **UNITY**

**R =** be **RESPECTFUL**, courteous and compassionate

**C = CONSTRUCTIVELY** share, to promote the wellbeing of the **COMMUNITY**

**O = OWN** our own words and feelings, without blaming others

**V = VALUE** one another and our **VARIED** perspectives

**E = EMPATHETICALLY** and generously listen, and carefully **EXAMINE** our own assumptions, presuppositions & perspectives

**N = NOTE** opportunities for finding common ground

**A =** embrace **AMBIGUITY**, rather than debate who is right or wrong

**N = NEGOTIATE** cooperatively and collaboratively for the greater good

**T = TRUST** the Holy Spirit to guide us

We also developed a purpose statement, goals and objectives, as follows:

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

2024 Ad hoc Bylaws Committee

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**PURPOSE**

The purpose of this process is to review the current bylaws and to propose revisions to facilitate greater Ministry Team flexibility, improve efficiency, communication and collaboration, and optimize the number of elected leaders in keeping with available volunteers.

**GOALS**

Work as a team, adhering to the OUR COVENANT Agreement throughout the process.

Provide careful, phased review of the current bylaws.

Draft recommendations for changes to the Bylaws.

At each phase, submit drafts of potential revisions to elected leaders. On input from elected leaders, share draft ideas to the congregation for input.

Estimated completion of review process by early to mid May, 2024.

**OBJECTIVES & PROCEDURES**

Bylaws Review process:

Review in phases

Phase I – Articles I through V - target March 21 completion

Phase II – Article VI

Phase III – Article VII

Phase IV – Articles VIII & IX

Phase V – Articles X through XIV

Review for thoroughness, clarity, accuracy and consistency.

Review for useability and functionality, given the current context, as well as flexibility for the future.

Review for omissions and gaps.

Review to ensure that all facets of the Bylaws are in keeping with United Church of Christ polity and doctrine, and that they are representative of the heritage and Open and Affirming standing of Bethlehem United Church of Christ.

**C. Recommendations for changes to the Bylaws:**

As items in need of change are identified, the following format for proposed changes shall be followed:

Cite the Article, Section, Heading/Subheading of the item needing the change.

Cite the line number(s) being considered for change.

Document & show the original text.

Below the original text, document and show the proposed change(s).

Consider using a different colored text, to contrast the actual change from the original.

Provide rationale for the proposed change(s).

Date each draft.

**D. Reporting & seeking input from elected leaders and the congregation:**

Provide progress updates to elected leaders and the congregation on a regular basis, minimally once per month.

Solicit input of drafted changes,

Following the phased process;

Following the format cited in section C, above;

Providing sufficient notice (10-14 days) of impending availability of proposal for review;

Setting a deadline for receipt of input;

Receive input through various means, including but not limited to: verbal, written and electronic communication

Input may be given to any member of the Bylaws Committee

Anyone giving input in written or electronic forms, must provide their name and contact information, to allow for follow-up clarification inquiries.

Actions in response to received input:

(Continued on next page)

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a.) If wholly affirmative:

So note with date of affirmation on the proposal.

Inform elected leaders and congregation of affirmative outcome.

Move on to next item/phase of review process.

b.) If suggestions and/or requests for clarification received:

Inform elected leaders and congregation that further work is needed for the given item.

Reassess proposed draft

Discern if/how suggestions might be integrated.

Discern how both the drafted change(s) and rationale might be clarified.

Revise proposal

Provide a newly drafted proposal for review, per section D.2. of this document.

### **E. Completion of Project**

Estimated by early to mid May

Inform elected leaders and congregation that the project has been completed.

Prepare a final, complete copy of the proposed bylaws changes with rationale to the Leadership Council and congregation, if possible, no later than June 2, 2024, in preparation for the Annual Meeting.

If further work is to be completed beyond the Annual Meeting, those drafted changes affirmed by the Leadership Council and congregation are to be placed before the Governing Body at the Annual Meeting.

Work to be completed beyond the Annual Meeting shall be done per Sections B and C of this document. If necessary, Leadership Council may call a special congregational meeting to address final proposed changes.

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.



April 1

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm, 5:30 pm

April 3

- Busy Christian Hands, Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 6:45 pm

April 4

- Leadership Council, ZOOM, 6:00 pm

April 5

- Bethlehem Veteran's and Friends Monthly Breakfast, Alpha Koney, 8:30 am

April 7 Second Sunday in Easter/Communion Sunday

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

April 8

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm, 5:30 pm

April 9

- Bethlehem Women and Friends Monthly Breakfast, Alpha Koney, 9:30 am
- Outreach Team Mtg., ZOOM, 6:30 pm

April 10

- Cemetery Board Mtg., Cemetery, 9:30 am
- Busy Christian Hands, Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Member Care Mtg., Lounge, 4:00 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 6:45 pm

April 14 Third Sunday in Easter

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

April 15

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm, 5:30 pm

April 16

Facilities Ministry Team Mtg., Lounge, 3:30 pm

April 17

- Busy Christian Hands, Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 6:45 pm

April 20

- BUCC Anniversary Concert and Open House, Entire Bldg, 3:00 pm - 5:30 pm

April 21 Fourth Sunday in Easter

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

April 22

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm, 5:30 pm

April 24

- Busy Christian Hands, Lounge, 12:00 pm
- Choir Practice, Choir Rm., 6:45 pm

April 25

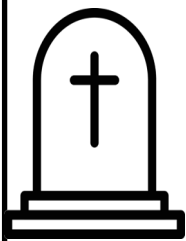
- Leadership Council, Location TBD, 6:00 pm

April 28 Fifth Sunday in Easter

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

April 29

- Hand Bell Rehearsal, Choir Rm, 5:30 pm



### Greetings from Bethlehem Cemetery

First, we would like to thank our many donors, for their gifts to the maintenance and preservation of our cemetery. It takes a lot of work, money, and diligence to maintain this large and historic site. We welcome donations at any time, especially now, as Mother's Day is approaching. When you want to donate to Bethlehem Cemetery, just indicate that on the memo line, when writing your check to BUCC. Thank you.

### Bethlehem Cemetery Expense Budget:

Starting this month and continuing in future months, our Visitor article will cover various cost aspects of the cemetery operations. This month we are focusing on the costs of utilities, mostly fixed expenses.

Last calendar year, the cost of the Water Bill paid to the City of Ann Arbor, was \$6722. The interesting part is we do not get water from the City of Ann Arbor, we have our well.

This entire bill is for **STORMWATER DISCHARGE**. The DTE bill for electricity was \$2134 and the vast majority of this was for the safety lighting provided on the tall wood poles. Waste removal, dumpster, \$1211. The cost of gas to heat the small building was \$866.

Most importantly, thank you to all Bethlehem members and friends for their interest and help in making Bethlehem Cemetery the peaceful and tranquil property it is, amid the busy City of Ann Arbor. If you have not visited in a long time, please drive through someday when traveling on Jackson Road.

Jamie Dylenski

Shannon O'Reily

Mary Friend

Marilyn Pearson

Susan Irwin

Mary Jean Raab

Jim Lutz



# BUCC CHOIR







# Youth Lenten Project



**Youth**  
activities





# Welcome to Our New Member







1845 Church

amazingly beautiful church and celebrate the rich history of our church in serving the Ann Arbor community.

The afternoon begins with building tours from 3:00-4:30 pm where you will be able to visit our awe-inspiring sanctuary and hear a brief presentation of its history and view the incredible stained glass windows. Tour leaders will guide you throughout the building to learn about the diverse community programs we support at Bethlehem. Following the tours, you are invited to return to the sanctuary to enjoy a short concert. The afternoon will conclude with light refreshments in our Fellowship Hall. This wonderful event is free of charge and all tour areas are accessible to those who require mobility assistance.



Present Day Church

## 190th Anniversary Open House

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

423 S Fourth Avenue, Ann Arbor

April 20, 2024

3:00 pm - 5:30 pm

Bethlehem UCC has been serving downtown Ann Arbor for over 190 years. We invite the public to come and see this

amazingly beautiful church and celebrate the rich history of our church in serving the Ann Arbor community.

The afternoon begins with building tours from 3:00-4:30 pm where you will be able to visit our awe-inspiring sanctuary and hear a brief presentation of its history and view the incredible stained glass windows. Tour leaders will guide you throughout the building to learn about the diverse community programs we support at Bethlehem. Following the tours, you are invited to return to the sanctuary to enjoy a short concert. The afternoon will conclude with light refreshments in our Fellowship Hall. This wonderful event is free of charge and all tour areas are accessible to those who require mobility assistance.

We look forward to your visit. Please contact the church office (734-665-6149) if you have any questions.

*"Bethlehem Church - Built Upon Legacies of the Past  
To Create in the Present a Future"*



## Covenant Association Annual Meeting

**Saturday, April 27, 2024**

9:30-11:30 AM on Zoom

**Register today!**

Registration link: [ZOOM REGISTRATION](#)

**Keynote Speaker, Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt**  
Minister for Environmental Justice  
United Church of Christ, National Ministries

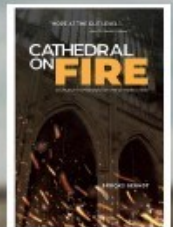
**Author of: CATHEDRAL ON FIRE: a church  
handbook for the climate crisis**

Reading ahead recommended

Order your copy today! \$6.95 each or \$25.00 for a pack of 5.

Order links:

[CATHEDRAL ON FIRE](#)



**Environmental Racism**



### **2024 Easter Gifts in Memory Of**

#### **Daffodil in Memory of:**

Frank Young  
Kennyon Edwards

#### **Our Parents**

Arlene Connell

Rev. Charles and Mary Brewer  
George Brewer  
Carole Katz

Martha Holliday

Robert & Jeanne Opperman

#### **Hyacinth in Memory of:**

Our Parents, Charles & Francis Birch

Robert & Jeanne Opperman  
Nancy Heusel  
Carole Katz

#### **Easter Lily in Memory of:**

Arlene Connell

Bill & Aletta Kulenkamp

Rev. Charles & Mary Brewer  
George Brewer  
Jay Katz

Our Son David

#### **Tulip in Memory of:**

Arlene Connell

Jay Katz

#### **Cemetery Fund**

Harriett & Ken Holzapfel  
Oscar & Martha Holzapfel

#### **Given by:**

The Young Family  
Violet Edwards &  
Family  
Ron & Pastor Diane  
White  
Cathleen Connell &  
John Schulenberg  
Margaret Perrett  
Margaret Perrett  
Larry Katz &  
Family  
Larry Katz &  
Family

Judy Coucouvanis

#### **Given by:**

Marilyn & Gary  
Pearson  
Judy Coucouvanis  
The Schenk Family  
Jill, Steve, Katie &  
Carrie Schwartz

#### **Given by:**

Cathleen Connell &  
John Schulenberg  
The Thibault &  
McCabe Families  
Margaret Perrett  
Margaret Perrett  
The Katz Family  
Marj & Gene Alber

#### **Given by:**

Cathleen Connell &  
John Schulenberg  
Larry Katz &  
Family

#### **Given by:**

Theresa Hilberer  
Theresa Hilberer

### **2024 Easter Gifts in Memory Of**

#### **Cemetery Fund**

Eleanora & Ernest Gardener  
Manfred Hilberer  
Frederick & Lela Keppler

Hugh Keppler

Ken & Harriett Holzapfel

Jerry Landers

Oscar & Martha Holzapfel

Ernest & Eleanora Gardener

Norm & Helen Grob

#### **Property Improvement Fund**

Ken & Harriett Holzapfel

Jerry Landers

Oscar & Martha Holzapfel

Ernest & Eleanora Gardener

#### **Given by:**

Theresa Hilberer  
Theresa Hilberer  
Mary & Audrey  
Keppler  
Mary & Audrey  
Keppler  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Norma & Conrad  
Foster & Family

#### **Given by:**

Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family  
Landers Family  
& Fox Family

### **2024 Easter Gifts in Honor Of**

#### **Livestreaming Fund:**

Nancy Gentner

#### **Daffodil in Honor of:**

Dani Webb

#### **Tulip in Honor of:**

Patricia Lindemann  
Our Grandchildren: Sophie, James,  
Jillian & Logan  
Arlene Finkbeiner

#### **Given by:**

Pat & Shannon  
O'Reilly

#### **Given by:**

The Schenk Family

#### **Given by:**

The Schenk Family  
Mike & Dindy Haab

Mike & Harriette  
Ehnis







**Habitat**  
for Humanity®  
Huron Valley

# House of Faith



**GROUP: BETHLEHEM UCC**

**WHEN:** May 11, 2024 / May 18, 2024

**TIME:** 9 AM - 3 PM

**LOCATION:** 636 Lynne Ave. Ypsilanti, MI  
48198. 900 sq. ft. • 3 bed • 1 bath

## DAILY CREW SIZE:

4-5 volunteers needed per day

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley engages our neighbors to build better neighborhoods through our volunteer, donation, partnership and ReStore efforts. We build homes, communities and hope... under one roof.

## WHAT TO KNOW & HOW TO PREPARE

- No construction experience necessary! Our House Leaders will ensure a variety of tasks are available for all individuals with a wide variety of skill levels and physical abilities.
- Wear comfortable clothes that can get dirty and dress for the weather. We do not guarantee heat/air condition at any of our work sites
- Wear closed-toed shoes or work boots (no open-toed shoes)
- Remove jewelry and pull back loose hair
- We have disposable water bottles on site, but do not offer food. Plan to go out or bring lunch (we'll break for an hour at noon, but do not provide food)
- Port-a-jons will be available
- Tools & equipment will be provided. You are welcome to bring your own, but you are responsible for them, and they are subject to our House Leader's safety check
- **Safety is our highest priority! Keeping a safe worksite is everyone's responsibility.** All PPE will be provided, but you can bring your own (eye protection, work gloves, mask, etc)
- **Projects:** Expected tasks will be emailed to you the week of your build day. Please dress accordingly
- **Age Restrictions:** Due to safety regulations, individuals under the age of 16 are not permitted on our active sites. Those ages 16 - 17 must have a waiver completed by a parent/guardian and be accompanied by an adult while on site

## SIGN UP TO VOLUNTEER

All volunteers must register online by the Monday before each scheduled build day.

Expected tasks, additional details and possible location changes will be emailed the week of each scheduled build day.

All MUST arrive by 9 AM and plan to stay on site until the projects have been completed.

## SIGN UP HERE:

<https://givepul.se/7td3il>

Access code: **Faith**

## Questions?

### Contact:

Jessica DeVol at  
jdevol@h4h.org  
or 734.882.2012  
www.h4h.org  
@H4HHuronValley



[www.h4h.org](http://www.h4h.org)

950 Victors Way, Ste. 50  
Ann Arbor, MI 48108

734-677-1558



UNDER ONE ROOF

# BUCC HAPPENINGS

## BUCC Volunteer Days for Habitat for Humanity Huron Valley

Once again, Bethlehem is committed to local affordable housing and building strength, stability and new lives through our local Habitat for Humanity. We have two volunteer days scheduled for **Saturday May 11 and May 18, 9:00 - 3:00.**

Four or five volunteers are needed for each day. BUCC, along with other area churches and community volunteers, are revitalizing 636 Lynne Ave in Ypsilanti. For more details and a **sign up link**, please see the House of Faith flyer in this Visitor. To sign up, you may also click here: [Habitat Volunteer Sign Up](#)



We hope to give a generous donation towards the costs of the project. You can contribute by supporting our upcoming **Habitat Coffee Hour** after church on **April 14 and 28**, or by donating on the Bethlehem website: [www.bethlehem-ucc.org](http://www.bethlehem-ucc.org) (Click on **GIVING** where there is a line item for **Habit Huron Valley.**) Or drop a check at the church office or in the Sunday offering marked **Habitat Huron Valley.**

Thank you for helping build new lives with affordable housing in our community.

## College Care Cards



This is the time of year that our college students will be finishing up the semester and are heading into their final exams. If you would like your student to receive an encouraging card, please send their

address to: [rowank55@gmail.com](mailto:rowank55@gmail.com)

## Bethlehem Women & Friends Monthly Breakfast



Tuesday April 9, 9:30 am

Alpha Koney Island, 4389 Jackson Rd.

Contact Susan Irwin at 734-255-5661 or

[siiwin46@gmail.com](mailto:siiwin46@gmail.com) for more info.



## Bethlehem Veterans & Friends

### Monthly Breakfast

April 5, 2024 8:30 am

Alpha Koney Island, 4389 Jackson Rd.

Questions? Contact Tom Ziesemer

## Food Gatherers Volunteer Day



Thanks to Steve and Carrie Schwartz, and Jim and Katie Rowan for participating in the Food Gatherers volunteer day on February 17. A total of 236 pounds of prepared foods and dairy products were rescued.



## Memorials and Gifts

Gifts Received February 15, 2024 – March 15, 2024

### BROADCAST FUND

Roger Hoxie Memorial

### CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND

### CURRENT FUND

Dorothy Memorial

Roger Hoxie Memorial

Rita Kohler Memorial

Douglas Mensch Memorial

### PROPERTY IMPROVEMENT FUND

David Alber Memorial

Wilbert & Betty Diuble Memorial

### BROADCAST SPONSORSHIP

Dedicated to all sponsors and listeners since 1955. This ministry has provided our family, our Church family, and the community with a way to be included in live worship when it was not possible otherwise.

Gifts listed were received through  
March 15, 2024



Please make sure that the office receives all Refrigerator Page and Email Blast submissions by 12:00 pm Wednesday 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**



### Calling all Liturgists!

It's easy being a liturgist, everything is already written; all you have to do is read aloud. Sign up in the Google doc using this link [LITURGIST SIGNUP](#), or contact Pastors Dawn or Diane, or call the office at 665-6149

### Would You Like To Use The New Phone App?

You have two options with this new phone-based system. Option 1: Call 1-855-669-8965 and listen to the service live or listen to the latest recording any time during the week. **Option 2: The new system will call you just before the service begins.** All we need from you is your name and the phone number the system should call. All you need to do is answer your phone about 5 min before the service begins. The audio portion of the service will run the entire length of the service (it is not limited to 60 min).

This will also allow us to bring the audio of non-Sunday worship services to you such as the Longest Night Service, Christmas Eve service, Good Friday services, etc. With this phone service, you will be able to hear the worship service wherever you are. **Please call the office (734-665-6149) to provide your name and the phone number we should use for Option 2.** We encourage you to share this message with anyone you know who relies on the radio broadcast to follow our worship services. Thank you!



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.

## Current Fiscal Year

| December, 2023       | Year to Date | YTD Target | 23 /24 Budget |
|----------------------|--------------|------------|---------------|
| Offerings and Income | \$254,273    | \$293,528  | \$391,370     |
| Expenses             | \$296,079    | \$362,667  | \$483,556     |
| Net                  | (\$41,806)   | (\$69,140) | (\$92,186)    |



**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  
 9:00 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.

|                                       |                                  |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <b>Rev. Dawn Christenson</b>          | <b>Interim Pastor</b>            |
| revdawnchristenson@gmail.com          |                                  |
| <b>Rev. Diane White</b>               | <b>Associate Pastor</b>          |
| pastordiane@bethlehem-ucc.org         |                                  |
| <b>Naki Kripfgans</b>                 | <b>Music Director / Organist</b> |
| musicdirector@bethlehem-ucc.org       |                                  |
| <b>Gwenda Mayes</b>                   | <b>Office Supervisor</b>         |
| parishadministrator@bethlehem-ucc.org |                                  |
| <b>Jim Rowan</b>                      | <b>Hand Bell Director</b>        |
| jrowan@umich.edu                      |                                  |
| <b>Aimee Winchester</b>               | <b>Administrative Assistant</b>  |
| 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: Open Position  
 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 Huibregtse  
 Ex Officio: Rev. Dawn Christenson