

# The Visitor

## August 2025

### Bethlehem United Church of Christ



Pastor Dawn's message    *All You Need is Love*

*"I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."* (John 13:34-35)

As the Beatles sang in their 1967 hit:

*All you need is love*

*All you need is love*

*All you need is love, love*

*Love is all you need*

Love – it's the stuff that makes life sweeter and better. It smooths all of life's rough edges. It lifts us up when we are low, brings us joy amid sorrow, soothes our aching hearts and keeps us going. There is no greater love than God's love for us. And as the Apostle Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, there is nothing that can ever take away God's love for us through Christ Jesus.

As Jackie DeShannon first sang in the Hal David, Burt Bacharach hit, *What the World Needs Now*, is love, sweet love. Those lyrics were never more true than today. As I write this, I cannot help but think about Ron White, who we lost in July. Ron was the embodiment of God's love. He touched everyone with kindness, generosity, compassion, caring and great love. All his life he made his little corner of the world a better place with love. He brightened the lives of everyone he met. What if all of us tried to do the same? Think of the transformative, ripple-effect that we can create. Truly, it's the only way to transform ourselves and our world. That's all Jesus asks of us – to love one another, as he loves us. Let that be our creed, moment to moment and day after day. With the help of God, may it be so. Amen.

**Blessings of Love,**

*Pastor Dawn*

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To my dear church family,

*Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. - Galatians 6:2 (NRSV)*

You have held Ron and I in prayer, continuously sent us cards (the many, many cards), showed up to help in any way you were able, and stopped by to visit and bring us joy or food. You have fulfilled the law of Christ. You have walked this path with us over the last year plus of Ron's diagnosis and then when I broke my ankle in April you continued to be with us. We praised God together for each and every one of you and now I continue to thank God for the love and prayers I feel daily as I walk alone toward my future. Thank you for the time you have given me to heal and be with Ron over these last few months. I'm getting stronger each day, but I'm not there yet. Bear with me as I continue to heal both physically and emotionally.

I want to lift up a special thank you to all who helped with Ron's Celebration of Life. I know what it takes to make everything come together and you made my heart fill with joy with your gifts shared on that day. A special thank you to the Member Engagement Team for the wonderful luncheon, our office staff, Gwen and Lisa, for all the behind the scenes efforts, Naki for coordinating the amazing music of the day and Pastor Dawn for her continued love and support during this time.

You are all a blessing to me and I look forward to being with you again very soon.

Christ's peace,  
Pastor Diane



Happy 192nd Birthday to Bethlehem Cemetery August, 2025 Beginning in 1833, church members and their friends buried their loved ones in the church yard outside the log cabin church sanctuary on Jackson Ave. As time passed, the burial grounds expanded, the church moved to town, services were no longer held at the cemetery site, and people of different faiths were welcomed. From time to time more land was purchased, and according to the survey and title search we completed in 2024, the cemetery now encompasses 24.5 acres. The first Burial Right Certificate, Deed #1 was issued to Adam Wahland and David Stoll in Block 1 in 1887. Today our newest recorded Burial Right Certificate is Deed #4150. As we look to the future, your Cemetery Board strives to keep our Bethlehem Cemetery the attractive, quiet, and peaceful place that it is today.

**Birthday Blessings to you, from**

**Jamie, Marilyn, Mary, Mary Jean, Shannon, & Susan**



### Great News!

The Bethlehem website has been updated to include easy access to sign up for opportunities here at church.

On the front page, at the bottom, are one click buttons that take you to sign up sheets.

You can add your name to be a

[Liturgist](#), provide [Flowers for Sunday Worship](#), [Community Time Host](#), or [Sponsor a Live Broadcast](#).

If you do not have access to a computer or need assistance please call the church office at 734-665-6149

## BUCC Volunteer Day 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 one remaining volunteer day scheduled for **August 9, 9:00 - 4:00**.

Four or five volunteers are needed for the day. BUCC, along with other area churches and community volunteers, are revitalizing 423 Ainsworth Circle in Ypsilanti. For more details and a **sign up link**, please see the House of Faith flyer below. To sign up, you may also click here: [Habitat Sign Up](#) (Use lockcode: Bethlehem)

We hope to give a generous donation towards the costs of the project by using this link to donate on the Bethlehem website: [Donate](#) 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.



## 2025 Build

GROUP NAME: Bethlehem UCC  
WHEN: Saturday, May 3 & Saturday, August 9  
TIME: 9 AM - 4 PM

LOCATION: 423 Ainsworth Cir., Ypsilanti

792 square feet • 3 bed • 1 bath  
Located in the City of Ypsilanti

Habitat for Humanity of Huron Valley is working to create affordable homeownership and a sustainable community for the people of Washtenaw County. For more than 30 years, Habitat's work has been a catalyst for stabilizing homes, families and communities.

### 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 prior to their chosen date.

Location details, expected tasks, and additional details and will be emailed to all volunteers the week of each scheduled build day.  
All MUST arrive by 9 AM and plan to stay until 4 PM, unless projects/tasks are completed earlier.

### LEARN MORE:

<https://givepul.se/whyidq>  
lock code: Bethlehem

Questions?  
Contact  
Mariah Forger at  
mariah@h4h.org  
or 734.968.8472



[www.h4h.org](http://www.h4h.org)  
@H4HHuronValley



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

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

734-677-1558



Building homes. Securing futures. Strengthening communities.

## Michigan Football Parking Volunteer Sign Up

Dates:

Aug. 30th, New Mexico, 7:30 pm

Sept. 13th, Central MI, Noon

Oct. 4th, Wisconsin, TBA

Oct. 18th, Washington, TBA

Nov. 1st, Purdue, TBA

Nov. 29, That Ohio Team, Noon



4 Volunteers are needed for each game Times slots will vary depending on game start time. All dates are in Signup Genius. Times will be added once games times is announced.

Click [HERE](#) to sign up



## COMMUNITY TIME



## Sushi Sunday



**Celebrating our Graduates**





# Ron White's Celebration of Life



## How to Watch BUCC Worship on YouTube

You can access our livestream/recorded services on YouTube a few different ways. Please note that we start the live stream at 9:50am every Sunday morning to capture the prelude and announcements before the worship service begins.

[Church Website](#): click on the "Watch" menu and you should see the live stream there every Sunday morning with a feed from our YouTube channel. There is also a link to our YouTube channel in order to access previous worship videos.

Smart TV: go to the "apps" on your smart TV at home to find the YouTube app. Open that and search for Bethlehem United Church of Christ Ann Arbor. When you find it, be sure to subscribe so it will be easy to find the next time. You can also hold the microphone button on your remote control and say "Open YouTube Bethlehem United Church of Christ Ann Arbor" and the search function should take you to our main YouTube page. From there, you can find the most recent videos and join a service that is in progress.

[YouTube website](#) or app on mobile device: Search for Bethlehem United Church of Christ Ann Arbor. Once you find one of our previous videos, click on the link to our channel to see all past videos. Be sure to subscribe so that you can easily access our service every Sunday morning.



Scan this QR code with the camera on your smartphone or mobile device to go to our BUCC channel on YouTube. Again, be sure to subscribe so that you can easily find us next week.

## August– Did you know.....

**The month is named after the Roman emperor Augustus, who was known as “Augustus”.** August is the seventh month of the year. The colorful flowers known as the gladiola and poppies are the two official flowers for August. The birthstone for August is the peridot which is created from molten lava.

**On August 28, 1963, what famous speech was delivered in front of the Lincoln Memorial?**

*Martin Luther King Jr. ’s “I Have a Dream”*

**Who penned her last diary entry on August 1, 1944?**

*Anne Frank*

**The parchment copy of which famous document was signed on August 2, 1776?**

*The Declaration of Independence*

**Which US President died suddenly on August 2, 1923?**

*Warren G. Harding*

**What U.S. state was added to the union on August 21, 1959?**

*Hawaii*

## Current Fiscal Year

May 2025	Year to Date Actual	YTD Target	24/25 Budget
Offerings and Income	\$412,646	\$422,000	\$422,000
Expenses	\$410,786	\$522,557	\$522,557
Net	\$1,859	(\$100,557	(\$100,557)

## Community Time

The Member Engagement ministry is adjusting the “coffee hour” to 9:30 am before service in the Lounge during the months of July and August.

Coffee, water and lemonade will be available. Please stop by and connect with fellow parishioners.



### IMPORTANT MESSAGE

When contributing to a special fund or collection, please use a separate envelope. Using your current fund or any other fund envelope, without indicating on that envelope what the funds are to be used for, may result in your contribution being applied incorrectly. We appreciate your cooperation in this matter.

**August 1**

- Veterans Breakfast, Alpha Koney 8:30 am

**August 2**

- Ann Arbor Pride Event, Main St., Noon-9 pm

**August 3**

- Community Time, Lounge, 9:30 am
- Worship, Sanctuary, 10:00 am
- Sunday School during Worship

**August 6**

- Bethlehem Community Crafters, Lounge, 12:00 pm

**August 9**

- Habitat Volunteer Day 9:00 am - 4:00 pm

**August 10**

- Community Time, Lounge, 9:30 am
- Worship, Sanctuary, 10:00 am
- Sunday School during Worship

**August 12**

- Ladies Breakfast, Alpha Koney

**August 13**

- Cemetery Board Meeting, Cemetery
- Bethlehem Community Crafters, Lounge, 12:00 pm

**August 17**

- Community Time, Lounge, 9:30 am
- Worship, Sanctuary, 10:00 am
- Sunday School during Worship

**August 19**

- Facilities Meeting, Lounge 3:30 pm

**August 20**

- Bethlehem Community Crafters, Lounge, 12:00 pm

**August 24**

- Community Time, Lounge, 9:30 am
- Worship, Sanctuary, 10:00 am
- Sunday School during Worship

**August 26****Founding Day 1833****August 27**

- Bethlehem Community Crafters, Lounge, 12:00 pm

**August 28**

- Leadership Council, Zoom 6:00 pm

**August 30**

- UM vs New Mexico 7:30 pm

**August 31**

- Community Time, Lounge, 9:30 am
- Worship, Sanctuary, 10:00 am
- Sunday School during Worship

**Bethlehem Veterans & Friends****Monthly Breakfast****August 1 at 8:30 am**

Alpha Koney Island, 4389 Jackson Rd.

Questions? Contact Tom Zieseemer

734-476-7515 or

via email at: zieseemerth@gmail.com



VETERANS  
Breakfast

**Bethlehem Women & Friends****Monthly Breakfast****August 12 at 9:30 am**Alpha Koney Island,  
4389 Jackson Rd.Contact Susan Irwin at 734-255-5661 or  
siirwin46@gmail.com for more info.**AUGUST VISITOR****Memorials and Gifts****Gifts Received May 26 – July 15, 2025****GENERAL MEMORIAL FUND**Robert Finkbeiner Memorial  
Beverly Hanselman Memorial**CHOIR FUND**

Ron White Memorial

**OUTREACH**

Ron White Memorial

**CEMETERY MAINTENANCE FUND**Fred & Lela Keppler Memorial  
Hugh Keppler Memorial**BROADCAST FUND**Carol Carzon Memorial  
Virginia Dabich Memorial**Building Room Requests**

Our building has many lovely spaces to use for meetings and workshops. We also have a demand for rental of these spaces.

PRIOR to planning an event, please contact office staff to verify room availability and to have your event scheduled on the calendar.

(734) 655-6149 or info@bethlehem-ucc.org





**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>Church Administrator</b>
parishadministrator@bethlehem-ucc.org	
<b>Jim Rowan</b>	<b>Hand Bell Director</b>
jrowan@umich.edu	
<b>Lisa Reach</b>	<b>Administrative Assistant</b>
churchoffice@bethlehem-ucc.org	
<b>Bill Husted</b>	<b>Maintenance</b>
<b>Dan Blakeney</b>	<b>Video Director</b>

## 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

## Executive Committee, Leadership Council, and Ministry Team Chairs

### Executive Committee

President: Jim Rowan  
 Vice President: Ron Dechert  
 Secretary: Barbara Schenk  
 Treasurer: P.J. Lindemann  
 Ex Officio: Rev. Dawn Christenson

### Leadership Council

President: Jim Rowan  
 Vice President: Ron Dechert  
 Secretary: Barbara Schenk  
 Treasurer: P.J. Lindemann  
**Business Ministry:** Steve Darr  
**Member Engagement Ministry:**  
 Judy Coucouvanis / Jenny Foster  
**Outreach Ministry:** Katie Rowan  
**Worship Ministry:** OPEN  
**Education Ministry:** Diana Slaughter  
 Ex officio: Rev. Dawn Christenson

### Ministry Team Chairs

#### **Business Ministry Team Chairs:**

Finance Sub Committee: P.J. Lindemann  
 Facilities Sub Committee: Steve Darr  
 Personnel Sub Committee: Ron Dechert

#### **Education Ministry Team Chair:** Diana Slaughter

Worship Team: Open Position

#### **Member Engagement Ministry Team Co Chairs:**

Jenny Foster & Judy Coucouvanis

#### **Outreach Ministry Team Chair:** Katie Rowan

**Worship Ministry Team:** OPEN

#### **Pastoral Relations Committee Chair:** Kurt Schmerberg

#### **Bethlehem Cemetery Board Members:**

President: Mary Jean Raab  
 Vice-President: Mary Friend  
 Secretary: Shannon O'Reilly  
 Treasurer: Jaime Dylenski  
 Elected Members: Marilyn Pearson & Susan Irwin  
 Ex officio: Rev. Dawn Christenson