

*Welcome to
Bethlehem United Church of Christ*



*August 16, 2026
Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost*



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.

Welcome to Bethlehem!

We are so glad that you are joining your voice with ours in worship today!
Everyone, please sign our green friendship pads, found at the end of each pew.

If you like, a comfortable space for families is available under the balcony.

God put the wiggle in children, and we welcome them in worship!

Children are also welcome to participate in Sunday school, if they prefer.

All are invited to stand, as you are able, for sections marked with a cross (†);

Congregational responses are in bold text.

Prayer Requests

Fill out a prayer request card found in the pews.

You may give it to one of the pastors before the service

or to an usher during the Hymn of Response.

CHURCH LIFE

No Bethlehem members were known to be in the hospital as of Wednesday.

ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Total: 71 (In Person: 50, YouTube:18, Phone: 3)

Worship is available in the sanctuary, via Phone Streaming and Livestream to access the Livestream go to our website: <https://www.bethlehem-ucc.org>. To join the Phone Stream, call 855-669-8965 prior to the start of worship. You may sign up to be called by the Phone Stream by contacting the church office during regular business hours. (You will be called about 5 minutes before worship begins.)

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

RINGING OF THE BELLS

WELCOME AND SHARING CHURCH LIFE

CENTERING MUSIC *Christ Has Broken Down the Wall* - Mark Miller
Summer Pick-up Choir; PJ Lindemann, soloist

Christ has broken down the wall. Let us join our hearts as one.
We're accepted as we are. Through God's love all is reconciled.
Cast aside your doubts and fears. Peace and love, freely offered here.
We will tear down the walls! God has called us, one and all.
Christ has broken down the wall.

OPENING WORSHIP

† CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Whether you arrived this morning carrying plenty or only crumbs; you are welcome here!

All: God's table has room for all who hunger.

One: Here, mercy is never measured by scarcity, but by God's grace.

All: Let us worship the God who welcomes all and nourishes every life!

† OPENING HYMN NCH #28 For the Beauty of the Earth

† OPENING PRAYER (unison)

God of boundless mercy, you gather us from many places and many stories. Some of us come with confidence, while others come wondering if there truly is a place for us. Quiet our fears, soften our hearts, and awaken us to the wideness of your mercy. Remind us that your grace is never scarce and your compassion never runs dry. In the spirit of Christ, who invites us all, we pray. Amen.

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you!

All: And also with you!

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

MESSAGE IN MUSIC

Lead with Love

- Melanie DeMore

Summer Pick-up Choir

William Lee, Teddy Borsodi and Kel Anders, soloists

Refrain: You gotta put one foot in front of the other and lead with love,
Put one foot in front of the other and lead with love!

Don't give up hope. You're not alone.

Don't you give up. Keep movin' on.

Lift up your eyes. Don't you despair.

Look up ahead. The path is there.

I know you're scared. And I'm scared too.

But here I am. Right next to you!

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

Jesus loves me, this I know, as God loved so long ago, taking children on their knee, saying, "Let them come to me." Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me! For the Bible tells me so.

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 15:21-28

From the Gospel:

Leader: The Gospel of the Lord, for the people of God!

All: Thanks be to God! Amen.

MESSAGE

The Gospel According to Table Scraps Rev. Matthew Hogue-Smith

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

† HYMN OF REFLECTION

NCH #522

I Love to Tell the Story (Vs 1,2,4)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Joys & Concerns

Silent Prayer & Sung Petition *Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying*

Lord, listen to your children praying; Lord, send your Spirit in this place;

Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us pow'r, send us grace.

Pastoral Prayer & Lord's Prayer

Please use these words or those most familiar to you.

Our God in heaven, holy is your name. Your kingdom come; your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

OFFERING

Invitation to give

Offertory

Improvisation

- Naki Kripfgans

† **Hymn of Thanksgiving**

NCH # 780

Doxology

**Praise God from whom all blessings flow;
Praise God all creatures here below;
Praise God for all that love has done;
Creator, Christ and Spirit, One. Amen.**

† **Prayer of Dedication** (unison)

Generous God, we offer these gifts in gratitude for the abundance you have shared with us. Bless them, and bless us, that through our giving our compassion may be experienced, and your table may continue to grow. Use these offerings to nourish hope, extend justice, and remind the world that this is room enough in your love for all. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

† **CLOSING HYMN**

NCH #497

Guide My Feet (Vs 1-3)

WORDS OF SENDING

POSTLUDE

For the Beauty of the Earth

- tune: DIX / arr. Janet Linker

Naki Kripfgans, organ

OUR TEAM:

Senior Pastor: Rev. Matthew Hogue-Smith

Associate Pastor: Rev. Diane White

Ministers: All the people

Director of Music & Organist: Dr. Naki Sung Kripfgans

Director of Handbells: Jim Rowan

Ensemble: Summer Pick-up Choir

Liturgist: Teresa Beagle

Sound Technician: Dennis Huibregtse

Videographer: Dan Blakeney

Streaming Technician: Volunteers Needed

Security Volunteer: Volunteers needed, please contact church office

Community Time Host: Ron and Alice Dechert

Reach out to us:

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info@bethlehem-ucc.org

<https://www.bethlehem-ucc.org>

