Welcome to
Bethlehem United Church of Christ



November 22, 2026
Twenty-Sixth Sunday after Pentecost

Jesus didn't turn people away
Neither Do We. United Church of Christ

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.



DEATHS

Bethlehem member **John Goetz**, passed away on Monday, November 9. At his passing, we were informed his wife, **Evelyn Goetz** passed away on July 5 of this year.
A private graveside service was held on Tuesday. Please keep their family in your prayers.

CHURCH LIFE

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

ATTENDANCE FOR LAST SUNDAY

Total: 79 (In Person: 61, YouTube:15, 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

Dona nobis pacem (Grant Us Peace) - arr. Ellen Foncannon

Gail Jennings, organ; Naki Kripfgans, piano

OPENING WORSHIP

† CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Christ comes among us in faces we may not recognize.
All: Open our eyes to see what is sacred in every person.
One: Christ meets us in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, and the forgotten.
All: Open our hearts and hands to respond with love.
One: Let us worship the God who is already present among us.

† OPENING HYMN Chalice #487 Help Us Accept Each Other

† OPENING PRAYER (unison)

God who meets us in unexpected places and faces, open the eyes of our hearts to recognize your presence among us. Soften our hearts toward those whose needs we might overlook, and move our hands toward acts of compassion and care. Through this time of worship, teach us to love you by loving the people you place before us. Amen.

† PASSING OF THE PEACE

One: The peace of Christ be with you!
Many: And also with you!

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

MESSAGE IN MUSIC *We Gather Together* - John Ness Beck
Bethlehem Chancel Choir

Fear not, O land, rejoice and be glad;
Be not afraid, ye beasts of the field,
For the pastures shall be green, the trees shall bear fruit,
And the fig and the vine yield their harvest.
People of Zion, rejoice in the Lord your God,
Who gives you good food, and sends down the rain.
The threshing floors shall be heaped with grain,
The wine vats shall overflow, and you shall eat,
You shall eat your fill, and praise the name of the Lord your God,
And you shall know that I am present,
That I and no other am the Lord your God.
Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice and be glad!

1. We gather together to ask the Lord's blessing;
He chastens and hastens His will to make known;
The wicked oppressing now cease from distressing.
Sing praises to His name; He forgets not His own.

2. Beside us to guide us, our God with us joining,
Ordaining, maintaining His kingdom divine;
So from the beginning the fight we were winning;
Thou, Lord, wast at our side, all glory be Thine!

3. We all do extol Thee, Thou leader triumphant,
And pray that Thou still our defender wilt be.
Let Thy congregation escape tribulation;
Thy name be ever praised! O Lord, make us free!
Rejoice, rejoice, rejoice and be glad!

Children's Time

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! The Bible tells me so.

SCRIPTURE READING **Matthew 25:31-46**

Leader: The Word of God, for the people of God!

All: **Thanks be to God! Amen.**

MESSAGE Jesus in Disguise Rev. Matthew Hogue-Smith

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

† HYMN OF REFLECTION **Chalice #600** **Jesu, Jesu (VS 1-3)**

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 *Simple Gifts* - Shaker Tune/arr. Childers

Bethlehem Handbell Choir

† 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)
Holy One, receive these gifts and turn them into acts of love. Through what we offer, feed those who are hungry, welcome those who feel alone, care for those who are hurting, and restore dignity to those who have been overlooked. May our generosity help reveal the presence of Christ throughout our community. Amen.

GOING FORTH TO SERVE

† CLOSING HYMN **Chalice #677** **Let There Be Peace On Earth**

WORDS OF SENDING

POSTLUDE *Now Thank We All Our God* - J. S. Bach/arr. Virgil Fox
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
Ensembles: Bethlehem Chancel Choir & Bethlehem Handbell Choir
Guest Organist: Gail Jennings
Liturgist: Jan Eadie
Usher: Hans Maier
Sound Technician: Gary Rogers
Videographer: Dan Blakeney
Streaming Technician: Jennifer Vasquez
Community Time Host: Judy Coucouvanis

Reach out to us:

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a just world for all