



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, November 12, 2023
24th Sunday After Pentecost

Worship Leader: Rev. Roy Rogers

Organist: Kathy Bowe

If listening from your car, please tune your car radio to 101.3 FM

***= Please rise in body or spirit**

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #555

“Sanctuary”

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: Are you ready for worship?

All: We have prayed that God will bless our time together.

We are ready!

One: Are you ready for worship?

All: Our church friends are with us, and they care for us.

We are ready!

One: Are you ready for worship?

All: We look forward to our part in the praise and the singing.

We are ready!

One: Are you ready for worship?

All: The stories of Jesus await us, the Holy Spirit will

send us out enthused. We are ready!

*OPENING PRAYER

One: You have been with us in the glory days of summer, O God;

All: you are with us as the nights draw in, and the cooler days are here.

One: You are with us in the carefree happy moments, O God;

All: you are with us when the darkness threatens, and times are hard.

One: You have been with us in the joyous company of family and friends;

**All: you are with us when it seems no one is present,
and when we feel lonely.**

One: You have been there for us when our faith was strong and vibrant;

**All: you are there for us as we face our doubts,
and work through our concerns.**

One: Sometimes you appear gone from us;

All: but you are always there for us, O Most Loving God! Amen.

*HYMN #372 all

“Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: O God, we confess that the spirit of wonder has not always
inspired our community.

All: Open our eyes, O God, to appreciate your mystery at the heart of creation.

One: The spirit of service has not always empowered our community.

**All: Teach us, O God, to be sensitive to the needs of others,
and to meet them carefully.**

One: The spirit of support has not always motivated our community.

All: Fill us, O God, with the desire to strengthen and uphold one another.

One: The spirit of sacrifice has not always marked our community.

**All: Turn our faces to the cross, O God, that we may understand
what it takes to overcome evil.**

Time of reflection...

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: We will not remain unmoved by the fresh insights God has given us;

All: we will move from understanding to repentance, and a desire to bring change.

One: And the life work of Jesus Christ makes clear that change is possible.

**All: We will take heart from the joy, the restored freedom,
and the restored health, of those touched by Jesus.**

One: And you will know the Peace of God.

All: God be praised! Amen.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #571

“Halle, Halle, Hallelujah”

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Matthew 25:1-13

‘Then the kingdom of heaven will be like this. Ten bridesmaids took their lamps and went to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were foolish, and five were wise. When the foolish took their lamps, they took no oil with them; but the wise took flasks of oil with their lamps. As the bridegroom was delayed, all of them became drowsy and slept. But at midnight there was a shout, “Look! Here is the bridegroom! Come out to meet him.” Then all those bridesmaids got up and trimmed their lamps. The foolish said to the wise, “Give us some of your oil, for our lamps are going out.” But the wise replied, “No! there will not be enough for you and for us; you had better go to the dealers and buy some for yourselves.” And while they went to buy it, the bridegroom came, and those who were ready went with him into the wedding banquet; and the door was shut. Later the other bridesmaids came also, saying, “Lord, lord, open to us.” But he replied, “Truly I tell you, I do not know you.” Keep awake therefore, for you know neither the day nor the hour.

SERMON

*HYMN #497 all

“Blest Be the Tie that Binds”

PASTORAL PRAYER... LORD’S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

CALL TO THE OFFERING (Jingle Change for the month of November supports the Sunday School.)

One: Each week we pray for the coming of God’s Kingdom. Though we do not know exactly what this will look like, we offer our gifts and talents to God for the work of the Kingdom here and now, that it will be known here and everywhere.

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE # 282

“Give Thanks”

Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He's given Jesus
Christ,
His Son (2 times)

And now...
let the weak say, "I am strong"
Let the poor say, "I am rich
Because of what the Lord has done
for us" (2 times)

Give thanks... (2 times)

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

One: The spirit of giving changes, O God, as you become our partner.

**All: Our reluctance becomes generosity;
our vision of offering widens to encompass gifts, skills and talents;
our focus changes to include national and international needs.**

One: Transform our giving, Loving God, in the Way of Jesus.

All: We pray in his name. Amen.

*CLOSING SONG "Go Now in Peace"

***Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev'ry day.
Go now in faith. Steadfast strong and true.
Know he will guide you, in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there, watching from above.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love. A-men, A-men, A-men.***

COMMISSION AND BLESSING

One: Your faith is strong; you are determined!

All: We will respond to God wholeheartedly.

One: You are prepared for discipleship; you will follow Jesus!

All: We will meet Christ in our needy friends and neighbors.

One: You will work together; you are one in fellowship!

All: We will participate with enthusiasm in the life of the faith community.

One: Your faith *is* strong, you *are* determined!

POSTLUDE

**Today's responsive liturgy pieces from:

Sparks, David. Prayers to Share- Year A, Wood Lake Publishing, 2012.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

Thanksgiving Eve Worship: WEDNESDAY, NOV. 22 @ 6:30 PM. JOIN US FOR DESSERT AND FELLOWSHIP FOLLOWING THE SERVICE!

THANK YOU!

A huge thank you to everyone who reached out to me during "Pastor Appreciation Month." As I continually say, it is my privilege to serve this faith community. I also appreciate your support as I have been working this fall on my clinical pastoral education. Although it's been a great learning experience, I look forward to the day when I can turn my complete attention back to BUCC. In Christ, Pastor Randy

- For many years Bethlehem UCC has supported Heifer International through an auction hosted by the Bethlehem Merry Christians. In order to make a donation in 2023, the Merry Christians are asking you to make a monetary gift by Sunday, December 10. Checks can be made payable to: Bethlehem Merry Christians. And mailed to: Lora Mathes, 21607 CTH C, Kiel, WI 53042. Thanks in advance for your generosity to help those in need. ~Bethlehem Merry Christians



The Bethlehem Ladies are taking orders for Poinsettias. They are \$9 each and the colors available are red, white and pink. The last Sunday to order Poinsettias is December 3rd. The Poinsettias can be taken home on Christmas Day after worship service. The sign up is on the table in the fellowship hall. Cash or checks to "Bethlehem Ladies" can be given directly to Ginny Schultz or put in her mail box. Thank you!!!

2023 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team

Elder/President - Steven Volland (920)286-0162 or svolland44@gmail.com

Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or trabefamily5@gmail.com

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Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 jm59umland@gmail.com

Pastor - Randy Kopenhagenver (920)286-2531 randynmel5@gmail.com



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Bob Radder

Those struggling with health issues:

Sarah Arnold

Heidi Konen

Brenda Voland

Darlean Rumpff

Helen Henning

Tom Lefeber

Jessica Horneck

Dawson Horneck

Crystal

Marie Rietbrock

Daisy Sippel

Darlene Horneck

Molly

Mary Beth Molitor

Sandra Tesch

Gary Steinhardt

Neal (Louie's Brother)

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

Other Concerns:

Those affected by war in Israel.

Those affected by the earthquake in Afghanistan.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 11/12: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship

Monday 11/13:

Tuesday 11/15: 6:30pm Consistory

Wednesday 11/15: 6pm Confirmation Class; ~Happy Birthday Julie Mueller!!

Thursday 11/16:

Friday 11/17: ~Happy Birthday Darlean Rumpff!!!

Saturday 11/18: ~Happy Anniversary Pat & Bonnie Hoban!

Sunday 11/19: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship;

**November Pantry Items:
Box of Cake Mix or Frosting**