



**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

11608 Lax Chapel Road - Kiel, WI 53042

Phone: 920.894.3332

Email: BethUCCKiel@outlook.com

Follow Bethlehem UCC on Facebook

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Sunday, January 12, 2025

First Sunday after Epiphany

Worship Leader: Pastor Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Kathy Bowe

If listening from your car, please tune to 101.3 FM

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

CENTERING BREATH PRAYER: as you inhale, say the first part of the prayer to yourself, and say the second part as you exhale. Repeat 5x

May the Lord give us strength :: and bless us with peace

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP

**O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light**

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Come, beloved of God, to remember who you are and whose you are.

P: **God in Christ, has named us all "Beloved."**

L: Yes, here and now, God's heaven of love is being poured out anew.

P: **May this motion of the Holy One, shape our hearts and minds.**

L: May it brighten the Epiphany light in us and the whole creation.

P: **And may it shape our words and work into good news for the world!**

***OPENING PRAYER**

Holy One, awaken us again to Your outpouring Spirit of Love. Through this generous gift, stretch our souls wide and form us into channels of your healing grace. Gift us with an ability to recognize You in each other, all imprinted with Your beloved blessing. Clarify our intentions, purify our actions, fill our words with grace and our hearts with hope. Yes, soak our thinking, our praying, our hoping, our everything in You. Amen.

***OPENING HYMN #226**

“Spirit of the Living God”

PRAYER OF NEW LIFE AND TRANSFORMATION

Loving God, let me enter again Your baptismal river of grace. Let it soak every stain attached to the fabric of my life and longings. Yes, Holy One, submerge me in You again and again and again. Cleanse every distracting impulse luring me away from You who are my heart’s deepest desire. Let no urgency be more important than Your forgiving love, always transforming. Today, help me choose you above every temptation that lures me to worship lesser things. By this of You, forgive me, renew me, and grant me the grace promised by You in Jesus Christ. Amen. (moment of silent reflection)

WORDS OF GRACE

Before we thought to turn to God, God already turned toward us in love.

The saturating grace of God is trustworthy and true.

Our prayers of transformation have been met with God’s outpouring of forgiving love.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Thanks be to God!

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #82 v. 1 “O Come let us Adore Him”**

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Isaiah 43:1-7

But now thus says the Lord,

he who created you, O Jacob,

he who formed you, O Israel:

Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;

and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.
For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you.
Because you are precious in my sight,
and honored, and I love you,
I give people in return for you,
nations in exchange for your life.
Do not fear, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you;
I will say to the north, 'Give them up',
and to the south, 'Do not withhold;
bring my sons from far away
and my daughters from the end of the earth—
everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.'

Psalm 29 – p. 610 of hymnal – Leader reads odd verses, people read even

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John answered all of them by saying, 'I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing-floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.'

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

CHILDREN'S TIME

SERMON

*HYMN #426

“God Leads us Along”

PRAYER CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER #403 “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... THE 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.**

POST PRAYER RESPONSE #403 “Lord, Listen to your Children Praying”

CALL TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE To tune of the Doxology

**Oh God, may we who bear your name,
By gentle love your grace proclaim.
Christ's gift of peace on earth declare,
And your anointing Spirit share. Amen**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**O Gracious God, we thank you for the invitation to grow through giving,
made possible by Your outpouring spirit. May these gifts we bring be used
to form ever-new blessings in this congregation and around the world. And
may our lives be the instruments of love and joy you desire. 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.***

COMMISSIONING

POSTLUDE

**This morning's prayers and liturgies are used with permission from: ucc.org and <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Dear Members of Bethlehem: Thank you so much for the Christmas bonus and for the support of UCCI church camps in my name. As you may know if you read my ordination paper, church summer camp plays a major role in my spiritual "upbringing." Your support of our camps means a lot to me. Serving Bethlehem as your pastor is a tremendous privilege. May God bless you all in 2025! – -Pastor Randy

- Packets of 10 tickets for the 2025 Chili Supper are available in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign out for packets which you can sell. Payment is due by February 5, 2025.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Wednesday, Jan 15th @ 1:00pm. Guest speaker at St. Peters UCC to speak about missionary work in Kenya. See flyer.



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Those Grieving:

Mark Beitzel
Gary Steinhardt

Those struggling with health issues:

Gary Rabe	Julie and Addison
Will Mathes	Heidi Konen
Jill Wehmeyer-Sheets	Emily (Melissa's cousin)
Brad Westphalen	Kurt (Randy's cousin)
Jessica Horneck	Darlene Horneck
Marie Rietbrock	Mary Beth Molitor
Tom Lefeber	Dawson Horneck

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin Nimmer Helen Henning

2025 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

Elder - Lee Watson (920)562-0588 or lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us

Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 rossw@forhealthycows.com

Deacon/Secretary - Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 LandKBowe@outlook.com

Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 srumpff@tm.net

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

Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 _randynmel5@gmail.com

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today, Sunday 1/12: 8:00 Sunday School; 9:30am Worship *Happy Birthday Kamlyn Rumpff!*

Monday 1/13:

Tuesday 1/14: 6:30pm Consistory; *Happy Birthday Shirley Henschel and Mekenzie Biwan!*

Wednesday 1/15: *Happy Birthday Judy Mueller and Bill Biwan!*

Thursday 1/16:

Friday 1/17: Confirmation Retreat at Daycholah.

Saturday 1/18: Confirmation Retreat at Daycholah

Sunday 1/19: 8:00 Sunday School; 9:30am Worship; *Happy Birthday Shelby Aschenbach and Hailey Wirtz!* **Spirit Articles Due**

**January Pantry Items:
Can of Soup**