

The Spirit of Bethlehem



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
11608 Lax Chapel Road, Kiel, WI 53042
(920)894-3332

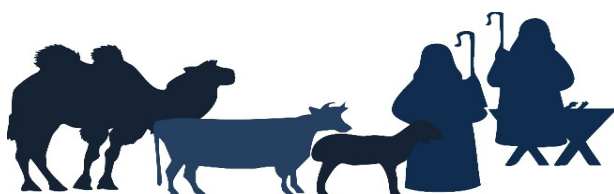
Pastor Randy's Ramblings:

Dear Members of Bethlehem,

God's grace and peace be with you as we enter into the season of Advent! Yes, we have reached the close of one church year and are now entering another. Perhaps your holiday decorating and preparations are well underway as we anticipate the birth of the baby Jesus! May the season of Advent bring a sense of hope, peace, love, and joy in you!

In my personal life, I too, am at a point of transition. Many of you know that this fall I participated in a Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) course. This work was part of my efforts to become an ordained pastor within the United Church of Christ. It required ten hours of online class per week, as well as 20 clinical hours as a chaplain at the hospital in Sheboygan. Those requirements are now complete. It was a busy and intense time, but I learned so much, some of which I'd like to share with you in my ramblings this month.

The first thing I learned, is that chaplaincy is not always about religion. As chaplains, we are present to provide spiritual support – whatever that looks like to the patient! The topic of religion was seldom mentioned unless the patient brought it up. More often than not, I engaged in conversations around a patient's hopes, fears, goals, and level of support. Occasionally, patients would describe how GOD factored into those areas of their lives. If not, I was not there to push religion, but to support the patient with a listening ear. Continued on pg 2



DECEMBER 2023

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JANUARY SPIRIT DEADLINE:

Sun. Dec. 17th

@ 5pm

Send to Traci at

trabefamily5@gmail.com

Pastor Randy's Ramblings (continued):

The second thing I'm taking away from my experience is that we have a MORAL obligation to take care of ourselves and our health. I encountered so many people who lived lives filled with self-destructive habits and a lack of attention to their health and well-being. Later in life, these habits and lack of care CAN catch up with us. Sometimes that requires our children to either care for us or make decisions on our behalf. I met so many people who were distraught by the responsibilities they faced, having to care for an elderly, sick parent. Clearly, some health conditions are characteristic of growing old and can't be helped. My comments are geared more towards preventable health issues caused by poor self-care and/or destructive habits.

Along with that, I'd also like to highlight the importance of advance planning directives. Many adult children are saddled with making difficult decisions for their parents, or worse yet, NO ability to make decisions because the patient hadn't designated a medical power of attorney. In those cases, the courts have gotten involved. PLEASE, complete your advance directives and designate an alternate decision maker in the event you can't decide for yourself. Discuss with loved ones in advance, your preferences for life-saving measures, quality of life, etc. It will make things much easier in the event these choices have to be made. I am looking at having a guest speaker come to speak to our congregation about these important actions.

And finally, HIPPA is real and taken very seriously in health care. In the old days, if you were admitted to the hospital, the hospital might call your church pastor and let him/her know you were hospitalized. That doesn't happen anymore due to HIPPA privacy laws. When admitted, they will ask you if you want a chaplain visit. Say, "Yes!" and when the chaplain comes, you can ask him or her to call your pastor. Another great option is to have a family member let the pastor know you're in the hospital.

All in all, I can't say enough about my CPE experience. I enjoyed every moment and learned a lot about pastoral care and myself! Fear not, though! I have no ambitions to move towards chaplaincy! I am very pleased and content to remain as your congregational leader. Hopefully a BETTER leader from what I learned in CPE! I'd love to share more about my experience with you if you're interested!

God be with you in this Advent season!

Pastor Randy



Bethlehem United Church of Christ

11608 Lax Chapel Road - Kiel, WI 53042

Phone: 920.894.3332

Follow Bethlehem UCC

on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/bucckiel/>

or Bethlehem's website at www.bethlehemkiel.org



Our Spiritual Leader:

Pastor Randy Koppenhaver

Phone: 920.286.2531 or email: randynmel5@gmail.com

- Sunday School begins at 8:00am. All children 4 years – 6th grade welcome!
- Gather in the sanctuary for worship Sunday mornings. Our service begins at 9:30am.
- Tune your car radio to 101.3FM to listen to the service in the church parking lot at 9:30am.
- View Sunday's service from the comfort of your home through Facebook live stream at 9:30am <http://www.facebook.com/bucckiel/> OR watch the recorded worship service on Bethlehem's website anytime that is convenient for you and your family www.bethlehemkiel.org

Pastoral Care:

If you have any pastoral/spiritual care needs please contact Pastor Randy.

2023 Bethlehem UCC Consistory Members

Pastor – Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 or randynmel5@gmail.com

Elder/President - Steve 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 or LandKBowe@outlook.com

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

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

If you are not able to join us in person Sunday mornings, please mail your giving envelope/check to:

Bethlehem UCC

c/o Ruthie Rumpff

11608 Lax Chapel Road,

Kiel, WI 53042



You can also give electronically! Please contact Ruthie Rumpff for details.

Bethlehem UCC has added a Donate Button on the Church Website

www.bethlehemkiel.org



Click on the Donate button to make a secure online contribution today!

Donate

Your giving will go directly to offset our day-to-day costs of maintaining the church. This option was added in addition to giving at church, mailing your giving to church or giving electronically.

The On-line giving is secure by using your PayPal account, credit or debit card. (The church is charged a 2.89% plus 49 cents for each transaction. You have the option to add that to your donation.)

Thank you for all your support!

Lectionary Readings for DECEMBER:

First Sunday of Advent December 3, 2023	Isaiah 64:1-9	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	1 Corinthians 1:3-9	Mark 13:24-37
Second Sunday of Advent December 10, 2023	Isaiah 40:1-11	Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13	2 Peter 3:8-15a	Mark 1:1-8
Third Sunday of Advent December 17, 2023	Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11	Psalm 126 <i>Luke 1:46b-55</i>	1 Thessalonians 5:16-24	John 1:6-8, 19-28
Fourth Sunday of Advent December 24, 2023	2 Samuel 7:1-11, 16	Luke 1:46b-55 <i>Psalm 89:1-4, 19-26</i>	Romans 16:25-27	Luke 1:26-38
Nativity of the Lord December 24 & 25, 2023 <i>Christmas Eve, Morn, or Mid-Day</i>	Isaiah 52:7-10	Psalm 98	Hebrews 1:1-4, (5-12)	John 1:1-14
First Sunday after Christmas Day December 31, 2023	Isaiah 61:10-62:3	Psalm 148	Galatians 4:4-7	Luke 2:22-40

Bethlehem Consistory Monthly Meeting: 11-14-2023

Present: Steven Voland, Jane Umland, Ruthie Rumpff, Traci Rabe, Ross Westphalen, Lee Watson, Kathy Bowe, Pastor Randy Koppenhaver

Call to order: 6:36 PM

Opening Prayer by Randy

Monthly Reports:

Financial Secretary – Ruthie

- Month income \$8,064.00 (\$318.00 above YTD collection)
\$69,147.00 (\$8,313.00 below YTD requirement)

The report is approved as presented (motion by Traci and 2nd by Jane)

Treasurer – Jane

- Giving's received in Oct to date are \$8,240.75 bringing the checkbook balance to \$48,742.50

The report is approved as presented (motion by Lee and 2nd by Ruthie)



Building & Grounds checking and Savings

Checking = \$1,458.71

Saving = \$6,659.47

Secretary – Kathy

The Secretary's monthly mtg minutes were approved as printed in the Oct Spirit of Bethlehem.

Approved by Ross and 2nd by Jane

Building & Grounds Updates

- Leak in choir room – tiles will be replaced with new ones
- Looking into outside lighting issues – Steve D. – pending
- Getting estimate for canister light replacement – Rick R. – pending
- Getting 2 estimates for parsonage roof
- Annual furnace cleaning – several furnaces are complete, the rest are pending
- Parsonage deck – Bldg & Grounds will look into updating next spring
- Exit lights and fire extinguishers have been checked by Northwoods
- New fire extinguisher has been mounted in the new garage
- Outside water has been turned off
- Snowblower is maintained for the winter season
- Oven is not working at the parsonage – renter will call to have it fixed
- Stakes have been placed in parking lot for snow plowing



Pastoral Report – Pastor Randy

Worship -

10/8, 10/22, 11/5

Upcoming “OFF” Sundays: Dec. 10 , Dec. 31

Thanksgiving worship- offering for cause – Cash and Cans to go to Kiel Food Pantry

Blue Christmas 12/14 – 7:00 pm

Confirmation/Youth

- Classes held 10/18, 11/1
- Will plan service project for Dec.
- Working on Mentor/mentee sheets for remainder of year
- RCF youth on October 29 - about 12 youth attended - Next event at Our Shepherds on 11/26
- Confirmation Retreat w/ St. Peters Jan. 19-20 - (\$60/student) -Pastor Herda and I are beginning to plan the retreat.

Mission

- Loads of Love on 11/6 - 2 clients - \$45.75 spent - Thanks Jane, for covering.
- WISE
 - Book Study, Monthly displays ongoing
 - NAMI guest for entire congregation - November 5
- Working with Darla Otto to get a family for Christmas - email forwarded to Sunday School

Pastoral care

- Phone calls and left messages 0x
- Other electronic communication 1x
- Cards 1x
- Visits 0x
- Hospital visits 1x
- Radder memorial service on 10/19

Wider Church/MID process

-COP (communities of practice) on Nov. 2

-MID work towards ordination:

-CPE (clinical pastoral education) at Sheboygan Memorial Hospital winding down - classes ending - clinicals continuing until early Dec.

-revised my learning covenant. Will be taking 2 courses next semester.

Communication and Other

-Weekly Blurbs and monthly newsletter articles

-Kiel Ecumenical clergy meeting on Nov. 29 at Kiel Alliance Church

-Participating in community choir - Dec. 10

Are we interested in a speaker to talk about medical/attorney issues

Member Outreach – cards sent on behalf of Bethlehem = 1 sympathy, 7 Praying for you



OLD BUSINESS

- Sound Room/Audio Visual/Website
 - Steven is in contact with Tom for pricing options for mics/carillon
 - Brian Bartels has hooked up laptop/camera with face book-Sunday School is using ear-marked money to pay the bill in full – Appx \$1600.00
 - Looking at new website contact – Laura Webs by Wagner
 - Thanksgiving service will be on 11/22/23 at 6:30 pm with fellowship and dessert to follow. There will be a Cash and Can collection to be sent to the Kiel Food Pantry
 - There will be a Blue Service on 12/14/23 at 7:00 pm
 - Annual Meeting Preparation
 - Committee Nominations – almost complete – anyone wishing to join a committee, see the list on the office window
 - Pastoral Position Review – Reviewed number of Sunday for 2024 and services performed for 2023
 - Budget – finalize at December meeting
 - Motion made (Ruthie) and 2nd (Ross) to continue OCWM giving of \$4500.00 in 2024
 - Pastors' salary
 - Food Drive Collection went well. Collected 22 grocery bags of food, totaling 292 items- Many thanks to the congregation.
 - Invite confirmation and any congregation members to a consistory meeting to view the inner workings of the church
 - Church decorating will be done on 11/26/23 after service – anyone is welcome
 - Advent beings 12/3 at the 9:30 service
 - Sunday December 17th – there will be a Children's Christmas program
 - Sunday December 24th – there will a morning service (9:30) and also an evening service with stories and candle lighting
 - Monday December 25th – there will be a morning service (9:30)



NEW BUSINESS

- Loads of love clients – give a small Christmas gift
- Beginning Dec 3rd we will again collect offering in the pews on a trial basis- results to be reviewed at the annual meeting. We are looking for greeters.
- **Annual Meeting**
 - **Annual meeting date 1/28/2024 after shortened service**
 - **Annual meeting reports are due to Traci on 1/7/2024**
- There will be a hymn sing on 12/31/23

Motion to adjourn by Traci and 2nd by Ruthie
Meeting adjourned at 9:20PM

Next meeting – Dec 12, 2023 6:30 PM

Closed with Lord's Prayer

Secretary, Kathy Bowe

December Worship Services:

- Sunday, December 3; 9:30am – First Sunday of Advent Communion Service
- Sunday, December 10; 9:30am – Second Sunday of Advent Service
- Sunday, December 17; 9:30am – Third Sunday of Advent Children's Christmas Program
- **Thursday, December 21; 7:00pm – Blue Christmas Service**
- Sunday, December 24; 9:30am – Fourth Sunday of Advent Service
- Sunday, December 24; 7:00pm – Christmas Eve Stories & Candlelight Service
- Monday, December 25; 9:30am – Christmas Day Communion Service



Bethlehem Sunday School:

Happy Holidays from the Sunday School. The kids enjoyed making turkey and pumpkin crafts last month. We are now looking forward to the Advent and Christmas season. The Sunday School students will again be lighting the advent candles, beginning with the younger classes. The first Advent Sunday will be December 3rd.

We will be sending a letter home outlining this years' Christmas Program, which will be held on December 17th during the 9:30am church service. All practices will be during regular Sunday School time.



The Sunday School will again be collecting items for a family in need. This family has lost their mom and the father is raising 2 children with autism on his own. There is a tree in the entrance that you can choose an ornament from. We need to start our collection early, due to meeting the delivery date.

Thank you for your donations... **the last collection date will be 12/10.**

There will be no Sunday School on 12/24 and 12/31.

Dates to remember:

12/3 Advent begins
Now thru 12/10 – Family in need collection
12/17 – Children's Program – 9:30 am
12/24 – No Sunday School
12/31 - No Sunday School

Merry Christmas to all!



Bethlehem Scrip:

Christmas is coming! Don't forget to include scrip cards in your gift giving and gift buying.

I have several different grocery cards for your holiday entertaining. I carry Piggly Wiggly, Pick n'Save, Walmart, Festival and Meijer grocery cards.

I have several \$10 cards available for the holiday season. Great gifts for teachers, bus drivers, or need just a little extra for that someone special. They are Amazon, Walmart, McDonalds, Starbucks, Bath and Body, Dairy Queen, Subway, and Noodles. Stop at the scrip table and check it out.

We also set aside 10% of all profits for the "families in need" program. If you know of someone in need this holiday season, please contact Pastor Randy.

Thank you for your support!

MONTHLY SCRIP STATS:

10/30/2023	\$ 3,110.00	\$ 100.00
11/08/2023	\$ 1,290.00	\$ 42.00
11/19/2023	\$ 1,440.00	\$ 42.50



~Linda Rabe

Confirmation:



December Confirmation class will be held on Wednesday, December 13th.

Class begins at 6pm

Loads of Love: Once a month, recipients meet Bethlehem's Loads of Love team at the laundry mat and are supplied detergent and dryer sheets to wash and dry their clothing, towels, and bedding. Loads of Love also generously provides the quarters for the washers and dryers. With your help Bethlehem will continue to do God's work through this important mission. Your donations can be placed in the "Laundry Detergent" container located near the entrance to the sanctuary.



Thank you for sharing God's love through your generosity!



Bethlehem Ladies:

The Bethlehem Ladies met at 8:30am on Sunday, November 19th with 3 members present.

The planning our 2024 calendar and election of Secretary were tabled until the next meeting when more members will be present.

Our next meeting is Sunday, December 3rd following worship service. During our meeting we will be exchanging our Christmas gifts with our Secret Pals. After our meeting, we will go to Riverview Restaurant for a Christmas Luncheon.

A reminder to all those who ordered Poinsettias that they can be taken home after the Christmas Day worship service.

On to wash communion glasses:

December 3rd – Husbands of Ladies

December 25th – Shirley and Jeanette



Polly Jeanty, Secretary

Heifer Project Auction



Do you remember life before Covid? Things have changed, the way we do things has changed. We remember the fun the Merry Christians had by hosting an Auction to raise funds for Heifer International. We remember the pies, the angel food candy, the bidding, the snacks.

We are planning to again have such an auction, but not until 2024. We are in the process of brainstorming to make the next auction as rewarding as those in the past.

In order to make a donation in 2023, the Merry Christians are again asking you to make a monetary gift by Sunday, December 10. Utilizing the enclosed, addressed envelope you can

- mail your donation
- drop off in person at any worship service
- or utilize the new house size mail box at the front entrance of the church

The Merry Christians will add to the gift total so people who depend on us will be helped.

The goal of every Heifer project is to help families achieve self-reliance. This is done by providing families the tools they need to sustain themselves, and it's thanks to the generosity of donors like you. The "teach a man to fish" philosophy is what drove Dan West to found Heifer International over 70 years ago. That philosophy still inspires the work to end world hunger and poverty throughout the world.

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



From the Church Historian:

The following was written by Heidi Konen and read at Bethlehem's November 19, 2023 worship Service:

Today we are here to celebrate Bethlehem Ladies Aid being 110 years old. It all started back in 1913 under the leadership of Rev. Caleb Hauser. There were 13 women. At that time dues were \$.15 a month.

Through the years the ladies have been busy doing fundraising and other projects to help raise money. They help with buying the organ, furniture, and carpeting.

In 1957 an addition was added on to the church for which the ladies pledged \$2000. They made quilts, laprobes for the local nursing homes. Many times they did refunding where certain items were done by collecting UPC codes off items and that was sent in and the ladies were sent gifts for which we used as gifts and door prizes. Bingo was a great way back then and we now have been doing at the nursing homes.

Back in 1983 through 1995 Bethlehem Ladies sponsored a child's schooling in India.

In 2006 we changed our name from Bethlehem Ladies Aid to Bethlehem Ladies. Each year we give a scholarship of \$100.00 to any UCC person that chooses to go to a Seminary College or some type of religious field work. We buy handkerchiefs for baptisms and at time we go to Field of Dreams to play Bingo so as to visit with Doris Mae and Merlin so as to remember two very special people of our congregation.

Today our Bethlehem Ladies have dwindled down to 8, but we still meet and get the job done. Sounds like fun, right? If anyone is interested in joining, just come and speak to one of us. 110 years ago the women in the Bethlehem Ladies group had big dreams. The current members strive to continue those dreams so as to not forget the history of Bethlehem UCC – "The Little White Church on the Hill".



TO FULFILL WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET.

Matthew 1:22, ESV

Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Joys:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Bob Radder



Those struggling with health issues:



Sarah Arnold

Neal (Louie's Brother)

Mary Beth Molitor

Marie Rietbrock

Brenda Voland

Heidi Konen

Gary Steinhardt

Sandra Tesch

Doreen Schmidt

Tom Lefeber

Helen Henning

Hattie Lucille

Darlene Horneck

Daisy Sippel

Dawson Horneck

Jessica Horneck

Crystal (Friend of Koppenhavers)

Molly (Friend of Koppenhavers)

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin & Doris Mae Ninmer

Other concerns:

Those affected by war in Israel and Ukraine.

Those affected by violence and oppression in other places of the world.

Those affected by recent gun violence.

Save the Date(s)

February 7, 2024 – Bethlehem Chili Supper



Why a Chili Supper?

- A) An opportunity to work together, to get to know each other.*
- B) The profits are split between the small groups of the church so that each group can carry out their own mission and projects.*
- C) All of the above.*

Plans are underway to carry on the annual Chili supper and for the fourth time will be: Drive thru/pick up only

The crew is already at work ordering.

We will be ordering more than 1,400 slices of bread. Whoa, that's a lotta bread!

Your help needed:

Sunday, February 4, 2024

10:30 – 12 noon

Prep day: Set up work areas, cook meat etc.

Wednesday, February 7, 2024

Bring Tortes

8:00 – 12 noon

Cook Chili, serve noon lunches

3:00 – 6:30 pm

Serve Chili, Dishes, Clean up

Help Wanted: Car Hops

No Experience Needed

Roller Skates Optional, not required.

Job limited to a few hours for one day only

Approximately 3:00 pm to 6:30 pm

Benefits: A warm feeling in your heart.

Snow Removal Volunteers Needed:

The snow will be here before we know it. We need your help shoveling the church sidewalk and entry. If you are able to lend a hand, please sign up in the fellowship hall. Thank you!



Save your Christmas Lights:

Do you have Christmas lights that no longer work? DON'T THROW THEM OUT! Please bring them to church and place them in the basket under the mailboxes in the fellowship hall.

Save your Aluminum Cans:



Sunday School continues to collect aluminum cans. Place your bags in the old garage next to the cemetery.



Kiel Community Pantry Collection

Bethlehem members shared God's love with the community in October and November. A total of 22 grocery bags were filled to the top with 292 food and hygiene products.

That is pretty amazing for a little country church.

We are truly the little church that does great things!

KIEL FOOD PANTRY FOOD DRIVE!



BETHLEHEM UCC DONATIONS OF FOOD ITEMS



DECEMBER VINNIE'S PANTRY ITEMS - Box of Cereal

DECEMBER Jingle Change supports: The Christmas Fund

December Bethlehem Events:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 9-11am Cookie Walk at St. Peter's UCC - Kiel
3 8am Sunday School 8:30am Bethlehem Ladies mtg. 9:30am Communion Service w/Pastor Randy	4 Loads of Love	5	6	7	8	9
10 8am Sunday School 9:30am Service 3:30pm SingJoy at St. Peter's Kiel	11	12 6:30pm Consistory mtg.	13 6pm Confirmation class	14	15	16
17 8am Sunday School 9:30am Children's Christmas Program 5pm January Spirit articles due to Traci	18	19	20	21 7:00pm Blue Christmas Service	22	23
24 9:30am Christmas Eve Service w/Pastor Randy 7:00pm Christmas Eve Stories & Candlelight Service	25 9:30am Christmas Day Communion Service w/Pastor Randy	26	27	28	29	30
31 9:30am Service – Hymn Sing						

DECEMBER

Birthdays & Anniversaries

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1 Mavryk Suttner	2
3	4 Kristen Schmitt Kelly Biwan	5 Declan Radder Gary Steinhardt	6 Marcy Ninmer	7 Stephen Deignan Jr. Jeff Holz Jackie Voland	8	9
10	11	12	13 Darlene Horneck Christa Taylor	14 Steve Sheets Ivan Salm	15	16
17	18	19	20 Merlin Ninmer Rachel Suttner Judy Brockway	21	22	23
24	25	26	27 Ryan Jeanty	28	29 Dawn Wirtz	30
31 Cassie Jeanty						





Bethlehem's Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 28, 2024

*Sunday, January 7th All Church Group Annual Reports are due to Traci Rabe by 5pm. Please send your report as a Word document to Traci at

trabefamily5@gmail.com

A stylized illustration of a nativity scene. The Virgin Mary is kneeling on the right, holding the infant Jesus. Joseph stands on the left, holding a staff. A small animal, likely a donkey or ox, is in the center. They are under a simple wooden manger structure. The background is dark blue with yellow stars and silhouettes of evergreen trees.

Sing Joy

United Christmas Choir

Salem U.C.C. - Plymouth
First Congregational U.C.C. - Plymouth
St. Peter's U.C.C. - Kiel
Bethlehem U.C.C. - Kiel

Sunday, December 10, 2023
3:30 pm

St. Peter's United Church of Christ
424 Fremont St., Kiel, WI 53042

FREE WILL OFFERING WILL BE ACCEPTED

