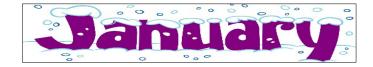
The Spirit of Bethlehem



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

Pastor Randy's Ramblings:

Greetings, good people of Bethlehem!

I hope that you had a joyous Christmas holiday and were able to spend it with people you love. Before you start packing away those decorations, remember the OFFICIAL "season" of Christmas is 12 days long, STARTING on December 25, and goes to the day of Epiphany on January 6.

We have reached the one-year mark. More specifically, I have been your called and settled pastor for one year now. From my perspective, things have been going well! I hope your perspective is similar. It is indeed, my honor and privilege to serve God and the people of Bethlehem United Church of Christ.

As we reflect on the past year, what feedback might you have for me? I hope the ³/₄ time role works for you. It saves the church money and gives me an extra weekend to spend with my wife (and sometimes, daughters.) It also gives you one week a month to hear a different voice, a different perspective, a different worship-leadership style than my own. I really see my part time role as a win-win for all of us.

Now that we're growing accustomed to the routine, what more can WE do at Bethlehem? Is it time to try adult bible study again? Is it time to ramp up our mission work and get OUT into the community serving meals or doing other projects? How can we work together to make life at Bethlehem more spiritually enriching for all?

Please share your thoughts and concerns with me. My goal is to be the best spiritual leader I can possibly be, while we joyfully worship and serve our great God.

Happy New Year! Pastor Randy





JANUARY 2024

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FEBRUARY SPIRIT DEADLINE:

Sun. Jan. 21st @ 5pm Send to Traci at trabefamily5@gmail.com

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

11608 Lax Chapel Road - Kiel, WI 53042 Phone: 920.894.3332 Follow Bethlehem UCC on Facebook <u>https://www.facebook.com/bucckiel/</u> or Bethlehem's website at <u>www.bethlehemkiel.org</u>

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 <u>http://www.facebook.com/bucckiel/</u> <u>OR</u> watch the recorded worship service on Bethlehem's website anytime that is convenient for you and your family <u>www.bethlehemkiel.org</u>

Pastoral Care:

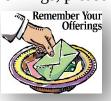
If you have any pastoral/spiritual care needs please contact Pastor Randy.

2023 Bethlehem UCC Consistory Members

Pastor – Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 or randynmel5@gmail.com Elder/President - Steve Voland (920)286-0162 or svoland44@gmail.com Elder - Traci Rabe (920)894-7903 or <u>trabefamily5@gmail.com</u> Elder – Lee Watson (920)562-0588 or <u>lwatson@kiel.k12.wi.us</u> Deacon - Ross Westphalen (920)629-0193 <u>rossw@forhealthycows.com</u> Deacon/Secretary – Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 or <u>LandKBowe@outlook.com</u> Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 or <u>srumpff@tm.net</u> 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.



Thank you for all your support!

Lectionary Readings for JANUARY:

Epiphany Year B	First reading	Psalm	Second reading	Gospel
Epiphany of the Lord January 6, 2024	Isaiah 60:1-6	Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14	Ephesians 3:1-12	Matthew 2:1- 12
Baptism of the Lord January 7, 2024 <i>First Sunday after the Epiphany</i>	Genesis 1:1-5	Psalm 29	Acts 19:1-7	Mark 1:4-11
Second Sunday after the Epiphany January 14, 2024	1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20)	Psalm 139:1-6, 13- 18	1 Corinthians 6:12-20	John 1:43-51
Third Sunday after the Epiphany January 21, 2024	Jonah 3:1-5, 10	Psalm 62:5-12	1 Corinthians 7:29-31	Mark 1:14-20
Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany January 28, 2024	Deuteronomy 18:15-20	Psalm 111	1 Corinthians 8:1- 13	Mark 1:21-28

Bethlehem Consistory Monthly Meeting: 12-12-2023

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

Call to order: 6:32 PM

Opening Prayer/Meditation by Randy – Advent Meditation for 12/12/23 (peace) by Kate Bowler Philippines 4:7 When you just can't find the peace.

Monthly Reports

• Financial Secretary – Ruthie

Month income \$6,398.00 (\$1,348.00 below YTD collection) \$75,545.00 (\$9,661.00 below YTD requirement)

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

• Treasurer – Jane

- Giving's received in Nov. to date are \$8,220.60 bringing the checkbook balance to \$48,546.43 The report is approved as presented (motion by Traci and 2nd by Ruthie)

Building & Grounds checking and Savings

Checking = \$1,221.71 Saving = \$6,659.47

- Secretary Kathy
- The Secretary's monthly mtg minutes were approved as printed in the Nov Spirit of Bethlehem.
- Approved by Jane and 2nd by Ross

• Building & Grounds Updates

- Oven is not working at the parsonage renter called and was able to fix it over the phone with repair person no charge
- Outside nativity Thank you Mark Riesterer for setting it up
- Thank you to the design team for the outside planter decorations
- Thank you decorating committee for the sanctuary tree and decorations

Pastoral Report

<u>Worship -</u>

11/19, Thanksgiving Eve, 11/26, 12/3 Upcoming "OFF" Sundays: Dec. 31, Jan 14, April 28 Blue Christmas 12/21 (Flyers and info sent to area UCC churches) Info about services submitted to Tri-County News

Confirmation/Youth

- Classes held 11/15 and 11/29
- Service project for Dec.- Made cards for care center
- RCF youth at Our Shepherds on 11/26 canceled
- Confirmation Retreat w/ St. Peters Jan. 19-20 (\$83.50/student) -Pastor Herda and I are working on the programming.

Continued on page 5

Mission

- Loads of Love on 12/4 3 clients \$113 expended (Thanks, Jane!)
- WISE
 - Book Study, Monthly displays ongoing
 - Attended COMET training through UW-Extension with Jane and Marie on 12/5
 - Meeting 12/17
- Families in Need: \$25x2 to Loads of Love clients, \$100 gas card to member
- Thanks for all the Food Pantry donations. There is a serious, ongoing need in area pantries.
- Mission Trip: Marie Mueller and Sarah Schisel attending with St. Peter's

Pastoral care

- Phone calls and left messages 5x
- Other electronic communication 2x
- Cards 7x
- Visits 2x
- Hospital visits 0x

Wider Church/MID process

-COP (communities of practice) on Dec 7

-MID work towards ordination:

- -CPE (clinical pastoral education) done
- -Continued work on my Learning Covenant and Matrix
- -Bowen Family Systems for Clergy class in Jan and Feb.

Communication and Other

-Kiel Ecumenical clergy meeting on Nov. 29 at Kiel Alliance Church - next meeting 1/17 @ BUCC

-Melissa and I attended the Bethlehem Ladies Christmas Luncheon as guests on 12/3

-Attend WiUCC "Nurturing the Soul" webinar on 12/6

-Participated in community choir - Dec. 10

-Rural Church Fellowship meeting @ Bethlehem - Sunday, Jan 7 @ 6:30pm

Member Outreach – cards sent on behalf of Bethlehem = 1 sympathy, 1 thinking of you, 1 thank you

OLD BUSINESS

- Sound Room/Audio Visual/Website
 - Steven is in contact with Tom (from TFG) for maintenance on the sound system First step will include new speakers, amp, carillon-up-date. Also looking into steeple speakers and microphones. Estimate is in the range of \$16,000.00
- New website contact Laura Webs by Wagner website transition will take place in January
- Thanksgiving service went well
- Annual Meeting Preparation
 - Annual report deadline is 1/7/24 (Sunday)
 - Budget near finalization
 - Annual meeting date 1/28/24
- Christmas Service Discussed need of help from consistory members

Continued on page 6

NEW BUSINESS

- Confirmation Retreat Randy & Nicole Herda are meeting to finalize plans.
- POA (Power of Attorney) meeting being looked at in Jan/Feb more details to follow
- Discussion on other activities that Bethlehem members can participate in
- Looking ahead Annual meeting for 2025 will be 1/26/2025 Discussion on report deadlines and mailing procedures

Motion to adjourn by Ruthie & 2nd by Ross Meeting adjourned at 9:10PM

Next meeting - Jan 9, 2024 6:30 PM

Closed with Lord's Prayer

Secretary, Kathy Bowe

Bethlehem Sunday School:

Happy New Year from the Sunday School.

First, we would like to thank everyone who contributed to the jingle change in November, and everyone who chose an ornament from our Christmas tree. We were able to give our family in need a **"VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS"**. (see list below)

Our kids did such a great job during the Christmas program. WOW---weren't they cute? We can be very proud of them. Thank you to the parents for bringing them to Sunday School each week.

The kids also did a great job of lighting the Advent candles each week.

Watch for upcoming events in February. Yes, it is time to talk about our birthday Leprosy month. Look for a letter coming your way.

We also continue to collect aluminum cans that can be placed in the old garage. In the 2023 year we collected enough cans to total \$134.90. Thank you so much for helping!

See you back in class on 1/7/24.

Summary of items collected for the family in need.

Boy-Ornament, Activity Board, Huggies, Desitin, Candy, Mattel Cars, Mittens, Sign Language Cards, Chew Pendant, Leap Frog Spinning Lights

Girl-Ornament, Socks, Perfume, Candy, Mittens, Fidget Toy, Chew Pendant, Sensory Lights

Dad-Turkey Sticks, Blankets, Candy, Gas Cards, Fleet Farm Card, Coffee, Coffee Mug, Work Gloves

Adopt a FAMILY

Family-Band Aids, Foil, Neosporin, Spatulas, Toilet Paper, Cookies/Plate, Nestle Quik, Paper Towel, Dish Soap, Crock Pot Liners, Toothpaste, Toothbrushes, Wet Brushes

Confirmation:

Confirmation Class The confirmation class participated in a service project in December. The class chose to create Christmas cards for the residents of the Field Of Dream Assisted Living facility. After spending an entire class making the cards, the class delivered the cards personally on December 13. Willing residents received a card, cookies, and a brief conversation.

The students did a great job interacting with the residents. Class members are Tyson Arnold, Aliyah Arnold, and Courtney Riesterer.

In January, the class will be participating in an over night retreat at Daycholah Center on Green Lake. The theme is "The Game of Life" and will be led by Pastor Randy and Pastor Herda of St. Peters UCC in Kiel. We are excited about this opportunity to join and collaborate with confirmation students from other area churches.

Classes in January will be at 6pm on the 17th and 31st.

Bethlehem Scrip:

Thank you to everyone who used the scrip program for their Christmas shopping and giving!

Happy 2024! Please consider scrip in the new year! We have cash and carry cards which are available every week. Stop at the scrip table and check it out!

Linda Rabe

MONTHLY SCRIP STATS:

11/26/23	\$3,165.00	\$148.34
12/3/23	\$2,880.00	\$144.97
12/10/23	\$1,495.00	\$ 48.30



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 after worship on Sunday, December 3rd. Five members were present.

August will be the designated month for collecting items for the Harbor House. Polly will supply a list for the congregation at that time.

This year's poinsettia recipient is Kaye Radder.

Ginny Schultz volunteered to take care of the flowers.

Polly will remain as Secretary.

The Bethlehem Ladies are looking for help from the congregation with the washing of the communion glasses. We wash communion glasses the 1st Sunday of the month and also a couple extra throughout the year for Easter, Christmas, Lent and Confirmation. There will be one Bethlehem Ladies member scheduled for each washing and we are looking for 1 or 2 more from the congregation to help. A sign-



up sheet with all the dates for the upcoming year is in the Fellowship Hall. Please consider helping us out. Thank you!!

Special thank you to Jeanette Wriedt for writing out Christmas cards in Bethlehem UCC's name for area Nursing Homes and Assisted Living. 150 cards were delivered to Field of Dreams, Sycamore Senior Living, Homestead Health Care, Willowdale and Willowpark. The residents are very happy to receive these cards.

On to wash Communion glasses on Sunday, January 7th is Barb Henning and a volunteer from the congregation.

There is NO meeting in January.

We closed with the Lord's Prayer.

The ladies revealed their Secret Pals with a gift exchange. We then enjoyed a lunch together at Riverview where the husbands and Pastor Randy and Melissa joined us.

Polly Jeanty, Secretary

Heifer Project Auction:



Thank you to all who made contributions to the Heifer International project. Details on the amount collected, and the animals donated will be in next month's newsletter.

Bethlehem Merry Christians

From the Church Historian:



Bethlehem church was officially organized on December 26, 1865. The following year was a busy time in the life of the church.

The record books show the first:

Baptism was April 1, 1866 for Elisabeth Emma Krause daughter of Charles and Regina (Nack) Krause.

Confirming their faith in 1866 were Albertine Schnuell, Augustine Voss and Ernest Voss.

Weddings in 1866 were:

March 27 – Frederick Strade and Augusta Fischer April 18 – Jacob Boe and Charlotte Krause April 19 – Wilhelm Vohs and Augusta Krause May 9 – Albert Voigt and Hulda Albrecht September 12 – Christian Bunge and Anna Mueller Kaye Radder, Historian

WISE Committee

In November, the WISE Committee brought in Donna Firman from NAMI, to share her experiences of personal mental health concerns with the congregation. She candidly spoke of how mental health conditions have plagued her throughout her life. The committee's hope is that the people of Bethlehem can begin to NORMALIZE mental health issues rather than STIGMATIZE. We all have mental health issues to some degree, and we want Bethlehem to be safe place to talk about these conditions with out fear of judgement and condemnation. The committee will continue to study the issue and provide the people of Bethlehem with information. If you, or someone you know is willing to share your personal experiences with the committee or congregation, let us know. Also, let Pastor Randy or a member of the committee know if you need resources or assistance. No one should have to deal with mental health concerns alone.

The members of the committee are: Pastor Randy, Melissa Koppenhaver, Jane Umland, Scott Umland, Traci Rabe, Nancy Zimmermann, Sarah Schisel, and Marie Mueller.



Did you know that Bethlehem has an Endowment fund?

We have a committee that manages money donated to the fund.

We meet twice a year. At each meeting we discuss causes, families and organizations that need help. We use the interest of the investments to help these causes.

In the year 2023 we gave donations to 2 families, 4 community organizations, which included Kiel Community Center and Kiel food pantry. We also helped confirmands who will be attending the retreat this month.

When you are reviewing your financial plan, please consider giving toward the Bethlehem Endowment Fund. Anyone is welcome to join the committee. There is something wonderfully fulfilling about doing good that lasts. Something that really makes a difference. Your gifts to the Endowment Fund are rewarding and add to a fund that will benefit others for decades.

If you have any suggestions of an organization or a family in need, see any committee member for more details.

Kerry Henning Marie Mueller Kathy Bowe

Thanksgiving Eve Offering:

Thank you to everyone who donated cash or canned goods at our Thanksgiving Eve Service. A total of 36 items along with \$86 was given to the Kiel Community Food Pantry. As you may know the need is great in our community. Your generosity is much appreciated.

Items Collected:

- 1 Manwich
- 9 Cans of Veggies
- 1 Tuna
- 3 Hearty Soups
- 2 Cans of Cranberries
- 1 Spaghetti O's
- 1 Stove Top Stuffing
- 3 Cans of Fruit 2 – Applesauce 2 – Linguine
 - 1- Beef Stew
 - 7 Soups

3 – Cans Pumpkin



Please Save Your Kiel Piggly Wiggly Receipts:

The Merry Christians have been collecting cash register receipts from the Kiel Piggly Wiggly store. No other area store receipts are of any use to us. We receive a monetary rebate for every dollar that is spent on groceries. Please help us help others by placing your used store receipts in the box under the mailboxes in the fellowship hall. Thank you!

Bethlehem Merry Christians

Save the Date(s)

February 7, 2024 – Bethlehem Chili Supper

Your help will be needed.

Sunday, February 4, 2024 10:30 – 12 noon Prep day: Set up work areas, cook meat etc. Tuesday, February 6, 2024 8:00 – 12 noon Cook Noodles Wednesday, February 7, 2024 Bring Tortes 6:00 – 12 noon Cook Chili, serve noon lunches Noon – 3:00 Prep Drive Thru/Take Out Orders 3:00 – 6:30 pm Serve Chili, Dishes, Clean up



Help Wanted: Chili workforce

It's truly appreciated any time you can spare to help with this church event.

With work commitments and family events it can be very challenging to squeeze in some extra time. Even retired people have established very busy schedules.

Please confirm when you can help, by email to <u>Kayerad@hotmail.com</u> or sign the list in the Fellowship Hall.

Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Joys:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Bob Radder





Tom Brickbauer Jaxxen Kane Mason Kannel Gene Radder Elizabeth Quackenboss (Nicole Watson's Grandma) Sarah Arnold Neal (Louie's Brother) Mary Beth Molitor Marie Rietbrock Brenda Voland Heidi Konen Gary Steinhardt Tom Lefeber Helen Henning Darlene Horneck Dawson Horneck Jessica Horneck Crystal (Friend of Koppenhavers) Dana (sister of Melissa K)

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin & Doris Mae Ninmer Other concerns:

Those affected by war in Israel. Those affected by violence and oppression in other places of the world. Those affected by the earthquake in Afghanistan. Those affected by recent gun violence.

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:

SODA

Sunday School continues to collect aluminum cans.

Place your bags in the old garage next to the cemetery.



Bethlehem's Annual Meeting is Sunday, January 28, 2024 *Sunday, January 7th All Church Group Annual Reports are due to Traci Rabe by 5pm. <u>Please send your report as a PDF or Word document</u> to Traci at trabefamily5@gmail.com

<u>Please Note:</u> All 2023 Annual Reports will be available in your church mailbox in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday, January 14th. Annual Reports will only be mailed upon request by contacting Traci Rabe at <u>trabefamily5@gmail.com</u>

Please bring your annual report with you to the meeting.





JANUARY VINNIE'S PANTRY ITEMS - A Can of Soup JANUARY Jingle Change supports: Mission Trip

January Bethlehem Events:

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY		FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 YEAR, Dew BEGINNINGS	2	3	4	5	6
7 8am Sunday School 8:30am Book Study 9:30am Communion Service w/Pastor Randy	8	9 6:30pm Consistory mtg.	10	11	12	13
All church 2023 reports due to Traci by 5pm						
14 8am Sunday School 9:30am Worship	15	16	17 6pm Confirmation class	18	19 Confirmation Retreat	20 Confirmation Retreat
21 8am Sunday School w/Pastor Randy Spirit News due to Traci by 5pm	22	23	24	25	26	27
28 8am Sunday School 9:30am Worship w/Pastor Randy and Annual Meeting	29	30	31 6pm Confirmation class			



SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1	2	3	4	5	6
	Kenzie	Jayden	Carol		Garrett	
	Koppenhaver	Jeanty	Wehrmann		Schultz	
	Grant Taylor					
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Ty Sheets		Pat Hoban	Harrison Zorn		Kamlynn	
		Jane Umland	Rich Schmitt		Rumpff	
		MaryBeth Molitor	Arlyn Retlich			
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Shirley	Judy Mueller				Hailey	
Henschel McKenzie Biwan	Bill Biwan				Wirtz	
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			
Lora Mathes						
Gary Rabe						

Bethlehem Chili Supper



11608 Lax Chapel Rd – Kiel

Wednesday Feb 7, 2024 3:00 pm- 6:30 pm

Drive Thru/Pick Up Only

Ready-to-Heat Chili,

Fresh Bread, Cheese, Crackers, & Homemade Tortes

Meal deal - \$9.00 Gallon of Chili - \$18.00

Directions: 67 N of Kiel - Right on Hwy X go 2 miles -Left on Lax Chapel – the church is located ½ mile on Left