

The Spirit of Bethlehem



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

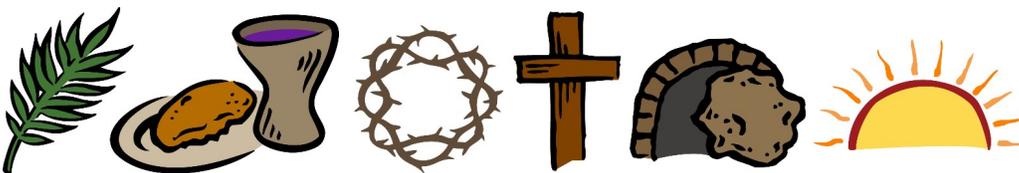
Reverend Randy's Ramblings:

Greetings Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

May God's grace and peace be with you. At this time, we are just about through the season of Lent. Perhaps you decided to make a sacrifice this year by giving something up. How's it going? The first two weeks without chocolate, Facebook, soda, or wine probably went okay. But by now it's probably ceased to be fun. Maybe your will power is wavering or your cravings are getting the better of you. Be strong. Remain disciplined. When you feel weak, grab ahold of your faith even tighter and turn to God for inner strength. Soon the sun will rise on Easter morning and we will all rejoice in the new life given to us by our Savior.

We are in a season of change. Both literally and figuratively. We have just passed the vernal equinox or "first day of spring." As any 8th grade science student could tell you, this is the day we have an equal number of daylight and darkness hours. Going forward the days will "get longer" until we reach the summer solstice in June. ("longest day" of the year) Along with the added daylight, we will rejoice in the change of new life springing forth from earth: Budding leaves, greening grass, perennial plants pushing up from the soil, awakened from their winter dormancy. All these things will bring us hope and delight.

Continued on page 2



APRIL 2026

Rev. Randy's Ramblings	1-2
Bethlehem Information	3-4
Lectionary	5
Consistory Monthly Mtg.	6-8
Confirmation	9
WI Conference of UCC mtg	9
Church Camp	9
Scrip	9
Feed my Starving Children	10
Bethlehem History	10
Sunday School	11
Loads of Love/Lounge	11
Bethlehem Announcements	11
Mini Spring Retreat	12
Prayer Concerns	13
Community Events	13
Vinnie's/Jingle/BUCC Calendar	14
Birthdays & Anniversaries	15

MAY DEADLINE:

April 19th

@ 5pm

Send to Traci at

trabefamily5@gmail.com

Reverend Randy's Ramblings (continued):

Changes are happening at BUCC as well. You may have noticed some experimentation with the "physical space" of our fellowship hall. The design team has set a goal of trying to make our space homier and more inviting in order to encourage fellowship and conversation. I fully support this! We WANT people to sit and talk and develop relationships. Changes can be hard for some people. Please know that any changes being recommended are motivated by a desire to enhance the community of Bethlehem. There is no intent to upset anyone. Since the church belongs to all of us, we encourage everyone to provide input. If you have ideas or comments, please share them!

Community is important to Christian living. Hebrews 10:24-25 says,

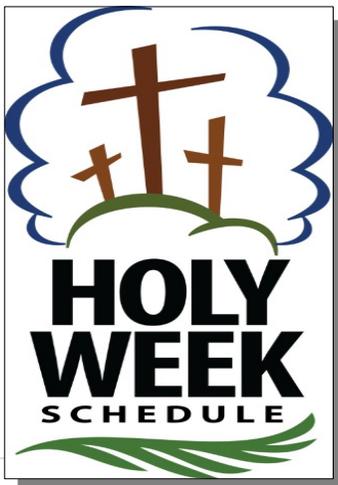
24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

The author of Hebrews is "calling out" those who resist community and/or don't attend worship and other events. In order to have a healthy relationship with God, we must also have healthy relationships with others. Christ proclaimed that when believers gather, he is there among them. (Matthew 18:20)

May we, at Bethlehem, continue to develop a greater spirit of community! If you're bringing your child to Sunday School, stick around while they're in class! Enjoy some coffee and conversation with other parents or other members of the congregation. After church, invite another member of the congregation to have a seat and share how the Holy Spirit moved you during worship. And of course, GET INVOLVED in the fellowship events that are offered such as potlucks, game days, church picnics, etc. As Peter said when in the company of Jesus, Moses and Elijah, "It is good to be together." (Matthew 17:4)

Be well! And may God bless you this spring!

In Christ's love,
Rev. Randy



April 2 ~ Maundy Thursday, Immanuel UCC at 6pm

**April 3 ~ Ecumenical Good Friday worship at Bethlehem 6pm
fellowship at 5:30 (food & coffee)**

April 4 ~ 6pm Ecumenical Easter Vigil, St. John's New Holstein at 6pm

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: Reverend Randall Koppenhaver

Phone: 920.286.2531 or email: randynmel5@gmail.com



- **Sunday School every Sunday September – May at 8am.**
- *Gather in the sanctuary for our worship Sunday mornings 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

2026 Bethlehem UCC Consistory Members

Reverend Randall 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!

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 1.99% plus 49 cents for each transaction. You have the option to add this charge to your donation.

Thank you for all your support!



Pastoral Care: *Please keep me informed of hospitalizations and other pastoral care needs. If you know of someone from our church family who is sick or in the hospital, ask if they've let me know. If not, offer to contact me on their behalf. I don't want anyone to feel unsupported in a time of need. - Reverend Randy (920)286-2531 or randynmel5@gmail.com*

LOOKING FOR LITURGISTS!

Reverend Randy is looking for persons interested in leading worship services as liturgists. Lead the Call to Worship, Opening Prayer, Prayer of Confession, and Read a portion of the scriptures. A sign-up sheet is on the door to the pastor's office. Let Randy know if you have any questions.



Lectionary Readings for APRIL:

April 2 Maundy Thursday ~ Exodus 12:1-14 Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b-35

April 3 Good Friday ~ Isaiah 52:13-53:12 Psalm 22 Hebrews 10:16-25 or Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9
John 18:1-19:42

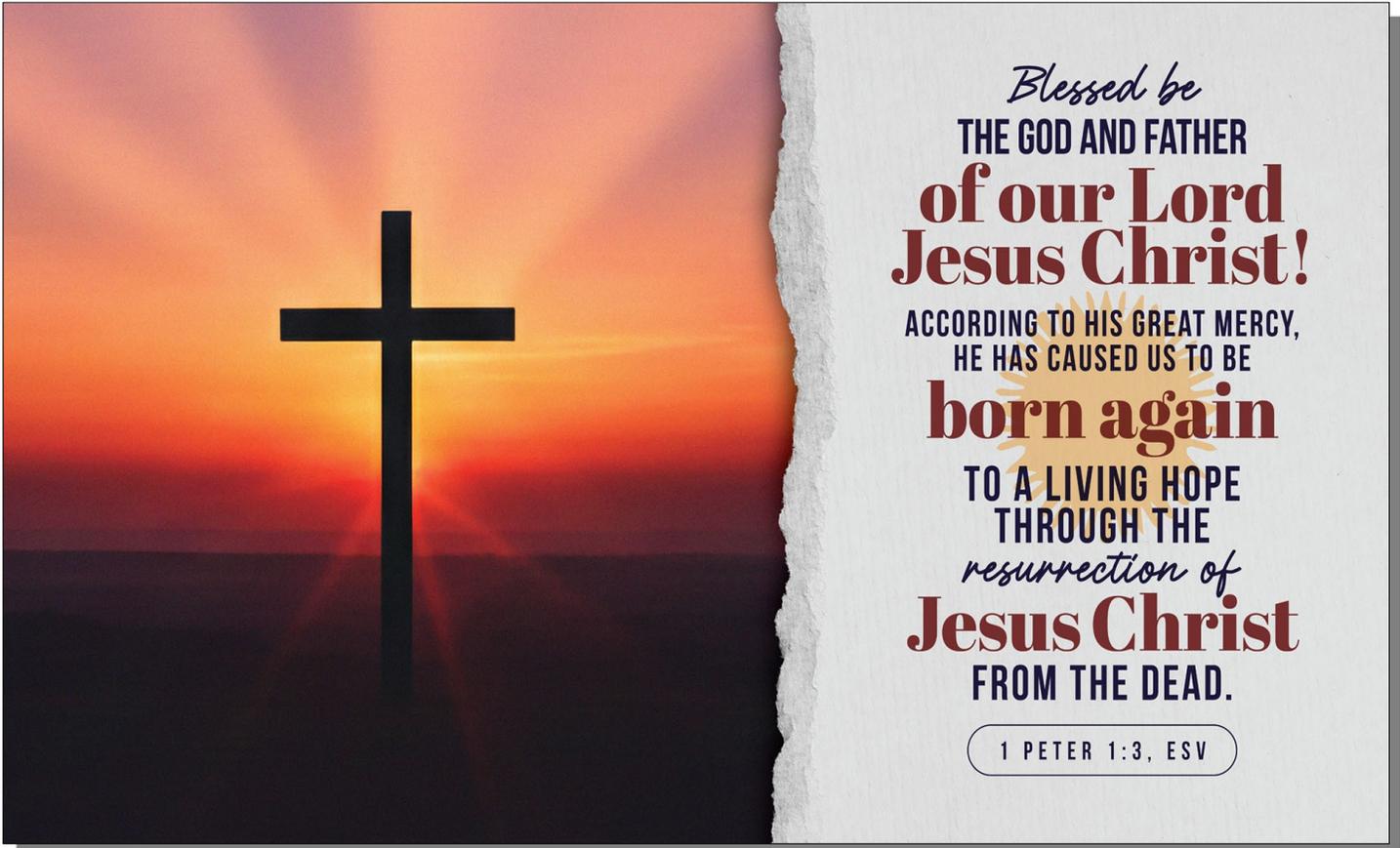
April 4 Holy Saturday ~ Job 14:1-14 or Lamentations 3:1-9, 19-24 Psalm 31:1-4, 15-16
1 Peter 4:1-8 Matthew 27:57-66 or John 19:38-42

April 5 Easter Sunday ~ Acts 10:34-43 or Jeremiah 31:1-6 Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
Colossians 3:1-4 or Acts 10:34-43 John 20:1-18 or Matthew 28:1-10

Sunday, April 12 ~ Acts 2:14a, 22-32 Psalm 16 1Peter 1:3-9 John 20:19-31

Sunday, April 19 ~ Acts 2:14a, 36-41 Psalm 116:1-4, 12-19 1Peter 1:17-23 Luke 24:13-35

Sunday, April 26 ~ Acts 2:42-47 Psalm 23 1Peter 2:19-25 John 10:1-10



Blessed be
THE GOD AND FATHER
of our Lord
Jesus Christ!

ACCORDING TO HIS GREAT MERCY,
HE HAS CAUSED US TO BE

born again

TO A LIVING HOPE
THROUGH THE

resurrection of
Jesus Christ
FROM THE DEAD.

1 PETER 1:3, ESV

Bethlehem Consistory Monthly Meeting: 3-10-2026

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

Call to order: 6:08 PM

Opening by Randy: Rev Randy led us in prayer

Monthly Reports

Financial Secretary – Ruthie

o Month income \$8,622.00 (\$231.00 below YTD collection) 14,613.00 (\$3,093.00) below YTD requirement) The report is approved as presented (motion by Traci and 2nd by Ross)

Jingle Change – month of Feb – Sunday School-Leprosy- \$187.57

Treasurer – Jane

o Giving's received in Feb to date are \$8,349.36 bringing the checkbook balance to \$32,146.87
The report is approved as presented (motion by Ruthie and 2nd by Lee)

Building & Grounds Checking and Savings

- Checking = \$2,325.69

- Saving = \$8,679.81

CD update (Bank First) (\$5000.00 ea.)

Invested \$20,000 in four separate 7-month & 11-month CDs of \$5,000 each. The maturity dates are staggered throughout the year, with the principal reinvested and interest designated for a special cause.

CD-#1088 invested Mar (\$5000.00)

CD #3584 invested Apr (\$5000.00)

CD #6473 invested May (\$5000.00)

CD #3541 invested Jan (\$5000.00)

Secretary – Kathy

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

- Approved by Jane and 2nd by Ruthie.

Building & Grounds Updates

- Nothing to report



Bethlehem Consistory Monthly Meeting (continued):

Pastoral Report

Worship - 2/15, 3/1, Field of Dreams on 3/12

Upcoming "OFF" Sundays: March 22, April 12, May 17, June 7, June 14 (July 5??)

Ecumenical Good Friday worship at Bethlehem at 6pm - fellowship at 5:30

Easter Vigil on Holy Saturday again at St. John's – NH at 6pm

Anything in particular for palm Sunday or Easter?

Confirmation/Youth/Sunday School:

Confirmation

o Class sessions on 2/25 and then the next two weeks

o Confirmands leading worship on 3/15

o Students have been advised that all work, including mentor sessions, must be completed before confirmation. All students have completed the point requirement.

o Youth: Olympic Watch Party on Feb 21 – Three Bethlehem youth attended

Mission

- Loads of Love - 3/2- 2 client, expended \$26.50 - \$19.75 collected in Feb

- WISE – mini retreat set for April 25 th from 9a-noon with Dr. Cary Johannes. We are promoting the event through various avenues.

- Mission Trip Meeting March 22-28 to Pikeville, KY –

- 11 scheduled to go representing Bethlehem, Immanuel, St Peters, Our Shepherds and First Congregational of Plymouth

- Leaving from BUCC at 5am on March 22

Pastoral care

- Phone calls and left messages 10x

- Other electronic communication 6x

- Cards 4x

- Visits 4x

- Care Center/Hospital visits 1x

Professional Development

- Grief coach certification #2 in process

Conference/Wider Church

- Community of Practice at Peace UCC, FDL on Feb. 18

- Registered for annual meeting on April 10 (we have a wedding to attend on the 11th)

Other

- Breakfast Club 2/28 @ Riverview 8:30am – 5 attendees plus pastor

- Watson/Meyer Wedding scheduled for 10/3/2026 (off site)

- Dayna Schultz wedding 5/31/2026 (off site) – premarital sessions have begun

- Ries Baptism set for April 26



Bethlehem Consistory Monthly Meeting (continued):

Member Outreach – cards sent on behalf of Bethlehem – 1-thank you

OLD BUSINESS

With the updating of new media equipment, there will be several items available for sale/donation.

- o Small TV with VHS capability
- o DVD player
- o VHS tapes
- o Large TV stand
- o Old projection screen and equipment
- o Also available is a couch and rocking chair
- Ice Fishing Sunday went well appx 12 people attended-thank you to Louie for being the grill master
- Sheepshead Tournament – 28 attended
- Game Day – 26 people stayed for the potluck – 8 people played games 5 guys chatted
- Snowblower Donation – member sold an old snowblower and donated monies to the bldg. fund
- Credit card – paperwork submitted to Bank First to pay internet and other bills. This will eliminate the pastor and treasurer from using their personal accounts.
- Holy Week – Good Friday service will be held at Bethlehem at 6:00 pm. Fellowship will be before the service at 5:30 pm
- Flags – tabled until next meeting
- Chili Supper profits – tabled until next meeting
- Breakfast club – 5 people attended a breakfast at Riverview

NEW BUSINESS

- Sabbatical – checking into guidelines
- Good Samaritan Fund – Randy will look into setting up a separate account to eliminate using his personal account. Motion made by Ross and 2nd by Ruthie (EIN No.)
- Looking into options for separate YouTube account.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

- 3/29 – Palm Sunday
- 4/3 - Good Friday – 5:30 Fellowship – 6:00 Ecumenical Service
- 4/4 – Easter Vigil – St John's New Holstein 6pm
- 4/5 - Easter
- 4/25 – WISE wellness event at Bethlehem 9-12:00
- 4/26 – Confirmation and Baptism



Motion to adjourn by Lee & Ross

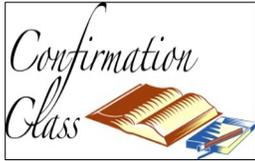
Meeting adjourned at 8:30 PM

Next meeting – April 14 2026 6:30 PM

Closed with Lord's Prayer

Secretary, Kathy Bowe

Upcoming Confirmation Classes:



Wednesday, April 8 - 6pm
Sunday, April 12 - Confirmands lead worship
Wednesday, April 15 - 6pm Confirmation
Sunday, April 26 - Confirmation Sunday

The annual meeting for the WI conference of the UCC, will be held April 10 & 11 at the Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake. Bethlehem is allotted two delegates from the membership. It's a time of worship, business meetings, seminars and more. There are funds allocated in the budget to cover your costs. Please contact Pastor Randy if you're interested in attending - even if just for ONE of the days!



"Church camp" can be a very meaningful and fun summertime activity. UCCI has great facilities at both Daycholah (Green Lake) and Moon Beach (St. Germaine) with programs for youth of all ages, including family camps! Scholarships are available too! An offering of Daycholah programs and schedule can be found in the fellowship hall or visit ucci.org for complete details.

Bethlehem Scrip:

Spring is coming! Remember to keep scrip in mind when planning your spring needs. I currently have Fleet Farm, Menards and Walmart which are available for cash and carry. Many others that I can order with just a week notice. I sell scrip on the first and third Sundays of the month. I have several different gas cards and grocery stores available for you to purchase and use for your weekly shopping.

Thank you for your continued support!

-Linda Rabe

Scrip Stats: Amount sold Profit

3/01/26	\$2,835.00	\$ 84.16
3/15/25	Cancelled due to snow	



CAPS AND EGG CARTONS:

Thank you to all who save egg cartons and caps. The egg cartons are used in a food bank, as eggs are re-packaged. The caps are recycled and used to make plastic park benches. **Please make sure that your caps are washed and free of any food or milk, otherwise they tend to mold and they are not passed along.** Thank you!



On Saturday, March 14th , several members and friends of Bethlehem joined the food pack event for Feed My Starving Children at Sheboygan.

In all 140 volunteers filled 152 boxes with 36 bags per box for a total of 32,800 meals. This will feed 89 kids a meal for an entire year.

We discovered that First United Lutheran in Sheboygan must raise \$30,000 to host this event and pay for the materials. One way they do so is parking cars at Road America in Elkhart Lake. They welcome any volunteers.

In the picture above, you will see the Bethlehem crew along with members from St. John's UCC (Schwarzwald). For the packing event we all get to wear hairnets. 😊



From the Historical Records of Bethlehem U.C.C.:

As we continue the celebration of 160 years at Bethlehem, here is a look at Confirmation at Bethlehem.

With the first confirmation at Bethlehem in 1866, three people made their vows confirming their faith. Through 2025 a total of 699 people have followed that path. Many will recall studying and memorizing the Heidelberg Catechism; some in German and some in English. Sometimes the pastor led Saturday morning catechism classes. Other times lay people have held the teacher role with evening classes.

Confirmation has been an important part of the life of the congregation. It is treasured as the celebration of each person's personal acceptance of the promises of the baptismal vows offered by his or her parents. It's at this time that each person becomes a full member of the congregation. He/she then has privilege of voice and vote at congregational meetings, the ability to serve on the Consistory, and for a large part of our history the moment when the person would be invited for the first time to the table of Jesus Christ.

During the month of April, please see the display of confirmation memorabilia in the Fellowship Hall to see how things have changed, yet remain the same. You will find examples of confirmation certificates and resource materials used throughout the years. Some of these are in German and some are in English.

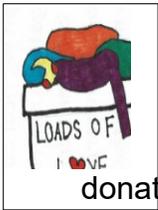
Kaye Radder, Historian

Bethlehem Sunday School:

The Sunday School will be purchasing Easter lilies for the Easter season. We will decorate the sanctuary with the flowers. There will be no sign-up sheet to purchase additional flowers. However, after the service on Easter, you can take one of the flowers home. This will be on a first-come, first-served basis. If you would like to reserve one before the service, see Kathy Bowe. Any flowers left over will be given to a congregation member that is home bound or needs some sunshine in their life.



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!

Get Comfortable!

*Bethlehem has a new "lounge" located in the middle Sunday School room.
Comfortable seating! Coffee! Books and Games!
We also have many resources on wellness if you're interested.
Feel free to relax or meet for conversation.*



Other Bethlehem Announcements:

- *There will be a choir meeting on Sunday 4/12 after the church service in the choir room.*

Wellness Mini retreat at Bethlehem UCC

- On Saturday, April 25, all are invited to participate in a mini retreat featuring psychologist and author, Dr. Cary Knier-Johannes at Bethlehem. Dr. Johannes' seminar will lead participants to improved spiritual wellness through centering, guided meditation, journaling, and more. The retreat will run from 9am-12pm. The cost is \$10 and includes a copy of Dr. Johannes' book, *The Missing Peace*. RSVP's are encouraged.

MINI SPRING RETREAT

Join us for a Morning of Wellness & Spirituality



Featuring Dr. Cary Knier Johannes, author, psychologist & UCC Lay Speaker.

Cary loves to blend her passions of wellness and spirituality through mini-retreats and individual spiritual coaching sessions. Retreat will include parts of her book *The Missing Peace*, guided meditation, tips on journaling, and other ways to center our hearts and minds

SATURDAY

APRIL
25

9 AM TO NOON

BETHLEHEM UCC

11608 LAX CHAPEL RD, KIEL, WI

Registration: \$10 per person

Includes a copy of Dr. Johannes' Book *The Missing Peace*

RSVP recommended - walk-ins accepted

Call: 920-894-3332 "leave a message if no answer"

Email: BethUCCKIEL@outlook.com

Snacks / Fruits & Beverages Provided

This workshop is being offered as a community service by Bethlehem UCC. There will be No intention to promote the church or any specific religious understanding.





IN OUR
Thoughts and Prayers

Those dealing with grief and loss:

The family of Jim Markelz

The family of Richard (Rick) Broetzmann

Those struggling with health issues:

Judy Brockway

Louie Bowe

Heidi Konen

Jessica Horneck

Sofia

Hubert

Chase Goekes

Molly

Eileen Koppenhaver

Linda Skinkis (sister of Judy Brockway)

Dawson Horneck

Darlene Horneck

Jackie Volland

Willow

Larry

Tyler Smith

Margaret

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin Ninmer

Helen Henning

Community Announcements:

-Tuesday, April 7 – 11:45a-12:45pm – “An Introduction to Zen Buddhism” Lakeland University

-Saturday, April 11 – Auction supporting Divine Savior Catholic School @ Millhome Supper Club – Raffle tickets available for \$5000 Dream vacation - see flyer in the Fellowship Hall

-Thursday, April 16 – 3:30-6:00pm – Smoked Pork Chop Dinner @ Saron UCC – Reservations are required – see flyer in Fellowship Hall

-Sat. April 18 – 9a-1pm – “Stewardship of the Body” – A workshop for women – Zion Lutheran Church, New Holstein – see flyer in the Fellowship Hall for more details.

March/April Kiel Area Community Food Pantry items:
Pasta, Rice and Crackers



Your April Jingle Change supports OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing)

APRIL BETHLEHEM EVENTS

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 6pm Ecumenical Good Friday Worship @ Bethlehem	4 6pm Ecumenical Easter Vigil @ St. John's New Holstein
5 8am Sunday School 9:30am Easter Worship w/Communion 	6 Loads of Love 4pm	7	8 6pm Confirmation class	9 WI Conference annual meeting	10 WI Conference annual meeting	11 WI Conference annual meeting
12 8am Sunday School 9:30am - Confirmands lead worship <i>Choir mtg after worship</i>	13	14 6:30PM Consistory mtg.	15 6pm Confirmation class	16	17	18
19 8am Sunday School 9:30am Worship 5PM MAY Spirit articles due to Traci	20	21 6:30 pm United Church Men/Women mtg at St. Peters	22	23	24	25 WISE Mini Retreat 9-noon
26 8am Sunday School 9:30am Worship – Confirmation Sunday	27	28	29	30		

APRIL Birthdays & Anniversaries

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1	2	3 Tyler Hanson Nicole Watson Ann Moore	4 Greg Schultz
5	6 Lily Watson	7 Marie Mueller	8	9 Sandy Tesch	10	11
12	13	14 Kerry Rumpff Brandon Schmitt Ryan Schmitt	15 Dawson Horneck David Moore Gary & Doris Rabe	16 Blake Holz Hattie Lau Easton Rumpff Bill & Karen Schlegel	17 Emerson Witkowski	18
19	20	21	22 Amy Wempner	23 Kaye Radder	24	25
26	27 Ryan Rabe Mia Watson	28	29 Louie Bowe	30		



Easter reminds us:
GOD KEEPS
His promises.

