



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, July 30, 2023

Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Polly Jeanty

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 #556 "Surely the Presence..."

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

One: O God, you have been with your people in times past.

All: Guiding Moses, instructing the prophets, finding your voice in Jesus you have been the secure presence for all the generations before this one.

One: O God, you are with your people of this generation,

All: giving them purpose, inspiration, and faith community to share.

One: O God, you will be with your people in the generations that are to come:

All: providing a message of hope and certainty amid the shifting forces, and a love that will not let people go in time or in eternity.

***OPENING PRAYER**

One: When heaven comes on earth,

All: it will be because the smallest deeds have made an impact for good beyond our imagining.

One: When heaven comes on earth,

All: it will be because we know the most valuable source and search it out.

One: When heaven comes on earth,

All: it will be because we are ready to commit totally to God and God's Way.

One: When heaven comes on earth,

All: it will be because we recognize the loving influence of God, and the darkness that seeks to overcome it.

One: Each one of us has the opportunity,

All: to bring closer the Kingdom of Heaven. Amen.

*HYMN #27 vs. 1,2,4

“How Great Thou Art”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Merciful, God, We confess we are not always merciful people.

We turn away in anger rather than seek solutions.

We criticize those who differ from us in culture or conviction, rather than seek understanding. We can hold grudges for a lifetime.

Forgive us our failures to live out the mercy we claim from you week by week. Open our hearts with your great love.

Time of reflection...

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Who is in a position to condemn us? **Only Christ – and Christ died for us;** Christ rose for us, Christ reigns in power for us, Christ prays for us.

This is good news for us. In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

So be at peace and make peace with one another for Christ's sake. Amen.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE “Gloria Patri”

Glory be to the Father, And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, Is now and ever shall be, world without end.

Amen, Amen.

SCRIPTURE READINGS

Romans 8:26-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be

conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn within a large family. And those whom he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us. Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is written,

'For your sake we are being killed all day long;
we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.'

No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

He put before them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.'

He told them another parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.'

'The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.'

'Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a net that was thrown into the sea and caught fish of every kind; when it was full, they drew it ashore, sat down, and put the good into baskets but threw out the bad. So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come out and separate the evil from the righteous and throw them into the furnace of fire, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.'

'Have you understood all this?' They answered, 'Yes.' And he said to them, 'Therefore every scribe who has been trained for the kingdom of heaven is like the master of a household who brings out of his treasure what is new and what is old.'

SERMON

*HYMN #311

"We Shall Overcome"

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

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.

CALL TO THE OFFERING (Jingle Change for the month of July supports the Bethlehem Ladies and their Christmas Mission Project)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE #438 v. 1 "We Give Thee but Thine Own"

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

One: Our offering does not change everything; it is like the yeast in the dough: it is the means by which change begins to take place.

All: And so we offer our treasure, our talent, and our time to God, and patiently we wait for it to go to work for good.

One: God will receive what we bring, and in God's good time, we will notice the difference.

All: We trust that the blessing of God rests on these gifts. God's glory will be known through them. 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: The Kingdom of Heaven is worth working for!

All: The Kingdom will come, but only if we sow the good seed; the Kingdom of Heaven will come, but only if we stop the evil that stifles; the Kingdom of Heaven will come, but only if we recognize its worth, and work to bring it closer. The Kingdom of Heaven will come, but only if we take ownership of its potential.

One: The Kingdom of Heaven will come, God will reign supreme, and we will know and understand for the first and only time!

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

The WISE Committee has been studying the topic of mental health since February. Now it's time to get the congregation involved! The first activity is going to be a **book study of Blessed are the Crazy by Rev. Sarah Lund**. (The WISE team studied this book in the spring.) The book study will be led by Traci Rabe and will begin on Sept. 10 before church. At that time the group will decide the schedule going forward. Please sign up in the fellowship hall. The book will be provided for you.

Youth Volleyball Tournament – TODAY!! – Bethlehem UCC is hosting!

- Baked goods (cookies, bars, cupcakes, sweet treats, trail mix, etc.) are needed for the tournament. A sign-up sheet is provided in the Fellowship Hall. Please package your goodies in single servings.
- Volunteers are also needed to sell hamburgers, hotdogs and drinks during the tournament. Any help you can give is much appreciated. Please sign-up in the sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

Church Picnic and Outdoor Worship – Sunday, August 6

- Beach/Hawaiian themed clothing and decorations
- The service w/communion and picnic will be outdoors (weather permitting) Bring a chair!
- Grilled hotdogs and drinks will be provided. Members attending are asked to bring a salad or dessert to share and to sign-up in the Fellowship Hall so we know how many to plan for.
- Games for all are being planned as well as a *bounce house (weather permitting)*.

Summer Concert Concessions – Wednesday, August 9th

- Bethlehem UCC will be providing concessions for the Kiel Concert in the Park. The menu includes hotdogs, chips, and a drink.
- Members are being asked to donate baked goods that can also be sold during the concert. Please sign-up on the sheet provided in the Fellowship Hall.
- We are also in need of 5-6 people willing to work the concessions from 5 – 8/8:30pm. Please sign-up on the sheet in the Fellowship Hall or contact any consistory member.

HHT A-Cappella

- Special music will be provided during our church service on Sunday, August 20th. Our very own Ross Westphalen is a member of this local barbershop group.

MISSION PROJECT:

In many parts of the world, women and girls live in period poverty – lacking access to necessary feminine care supplies. During the menstrual cycle, these hygiene materials are especially important to healthy practices. Not having supplies like sanitary napkins, tampons, soap and disposable plastic bags can create challenges that lead to unsafe and unsanitary conditions. During the months of June, July, and August our Bethlehem family will be collecting menstrual hygiene supplies and will then assemble these kits as part of our Mission Fest Sunday. Supplies can be brought to church during these months. See the flyer at church for the list of needed supplies.

Mission Fest – Sunday, October 8th

- Mark your calendars for Sunday, October 8th as we celebrate Mission Fest. This year's outreach activities will include:
 1. Assembling Period Packs
 2. Making sandwiches for Mission House
 3. Highway clean-up
 4. Playing BINGO at an assisted living facility

Lunch will be provided for everyone participating.

2023 Bethlehem UCC Leadership Team

Elder/President - Steven Voland (920)286-0162 or svoland44@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



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Joys:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Those struggling with health issues:

Heidi Konen	Marie Rietbrock
Bob Radder	Daisy Sippel
Darlean Rumpff	Darlene Horneck
Doreen Schmidt	Helen Henning
Tom Lefeber	Hattie Lucille
Jessica Horneck	Sandra Tesch
Dawson Horneck	Gary Steinhardt
Crystal (Friend of Randy/Melissa)	Brenda Volland
Molly	

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

Community Announcements

Timber Rattlers: Faith & Family Night! Friday, August 11 @ 6:40pm – Neuroscience Group Field @ Fox Cities Stadium. Flyer on Bulletin Board with QR code for discounted tickets

POLKA and Potluck! - Saturday, Aug. 26 – 2pm. Sponsored by St. Marks/St. James – see flyer and signup sheet in fellowship hall.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 7/30: 9:30am Worship – 12pm Volleyball Tournament; ~Happy Anniversary Steven & Jackie Volland!

Monday 7/31:

Tuesday 8/1:

Wednesday 8/2:

Thursday 8/3: ~ Happy Birthday Logan Tesch and Jaden Witkowski!

Friday 8/4: ~Happy Birthday Lillie Brockway!

Saturday 8/5: ~Happy Birthday Donna Truttman-Retlich!

Sunday 8/6: 9:30am Outdoor Worship w/ Communion – picnic and games to follow

**August Pantry Items:
Jar of Peanut Butter or Jelly**