



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, March 26, 2023

Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Kathy Bowe

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: We move towards the City and the Cross;

All: uncertainty grips us, as it does the disciples.

One: We know that enthusiasm will turn to rejection;

All: what will it take to keep our commitment strong?

One: The powers of evil and self-serving are ready for us.

All: Will we have the courage to stay faithful?

One: The sacrifice of God's Loved One appears inevitable.

All: Are we ready to be worthy of the name, “Christian”?

***OPENING PRAYER**

One: We are a worshipping community, marked with the Cross.

All: We will “sing the praise of him who died.”

One: We are a community of friends, marked with the Cross.

All: We will work together to defeat the forces of injustice.

One: We are a community of faith, marked with the Cross.

**All: We will proclaim the Good News,
that nothing can withstand God's enlivening love.**

One: We are a venturing community, marked with the Cross.

**All: In our acceptance, in our readiness to serve, in our endurance, we will
proclaim the root of our discipleship. Amen.**

*OPENING HYMN #537 all "Lift High the Cross"

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: Most loving and understanding God,
the jeering crowd no longer influences us.

All: We will speak out for the faithful way, even if it costs us.

One: The nails no longer have the last word.

All: We will break free from those situations that hold us fast.

One: The persuasive speech of a powerful leader no longer controls us.

**All: We will trust in our own abilities and will look to the pattern of Jesus
Christ.**

One: The stress of suffering, the thought of dying, no longer dominates us.

All: We will face the most severe tests and win through.

Time of reflection...

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

One: You inspire us to freedom, O God.

**All: The old patterns are overcome, new ways are followed,
confidence is restored. You liberate us from dryness
and dead ends to find ourselves; You free us to serve the
powerless and oppressed.**

One: Live in God's freedom, and know peace!

All: Thanks be to God! 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 LESSONS

Ezekiel 37:1-14

The hand of the LORD came upon me, and he brought me out by the spirit of the LORD and set me down in the middle of a valley; it was full of bones. He led me all round them; there were very many lying in the valley, and they were very dry. He said to me, 'Mortal, can these bones live?' I answered, 'O Lord GOD, you know.' Then he said to me, 'Prophecy to these bones, and say to them: O dry bones, hear the word of the LORD. Thus says the Lord GOD to these bones: I will cause breath to enter you, and you shall live. I will lay

sinews on you, and will cause flesh to come upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and you shall live; and you shall know that I am the LORD.'

So I prophesied as I had been commanded; and as I prophesied, suddenly there was a noise, a rattling, and the bones came together, bone to its bone. I looked, and there were sinews on them, and flesh had come upon them, and skin had covered them; but there was no breath in them. Then he said to me, 'Prophesy to the breath, prophesy, mortal, and say to the breath: Thus says the Lord GOD: Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.' I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood on their feet, a vast multitude.

Then he said to me, 'Mortal, these bones are the whole house of Israel. They say, "Our bones are dried up, and our hope is lost; we are cut off completely." Therefore prophesy, and say to them, Thus says the Lord GOD: I am going to open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people; and I will bring you back to the land of Israel. And you shall know that I am the LORD, when I open your graves, and bring you up from your graves, O my people. I will put my spirit within you, and you shall live, and I will place you on your own soil; then you shall know that I, the LORD, have spoken and will act, says the LORD.'

Psalm 130 - # 713 in hymnal –Leader reads odd verses, people read the even verses

John 11:1-45

Now a certain man was ill, Lazarus of Bethany, the village of Mary and her sister Martha. Mary was the one who anointed the Lord with perfume and wiped his feet with her hair; her brother Lazarus was ill. So the sisters sent a message to Jesus, 'Lord, he whom you love is ill.' But when Jesus heard it, he said, 'This illness does not lead to death; rather it is for God's glory, so that the Son of God may be glorified through it.' Accordingly, though Jesus loved Martha and her sister and Lazarus, after having heard that Lazarus was ill, he stayed two days longer in the place where he was.

Then after this he said to the disciples, 'Let us go to Judea again.' The disciples said to him, 'Rabbi, the Jews were just now trying to stone you, and are you going there again?' Jesus answered, 'Are there not twelve hours of daylight? Those who walk during the day do not stumble, because they see the light of this world. But those who walk at night stumble, because the light is not in them.' After saying this, he told them, 'Our friend Lazarus has fallen asleep, but I am going there to awaken him.' The disciples said to him, 'Lord, if he has fallen asleep, he will be all right.' Jesus, however, had been speaking about his death, but they thought that he was referring merely to sleep. Then Jesus told them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead. For your sake I am glad I was not there, so that you may believe. But let us go to him.' Thomas, who was called the Twin, said to his fellow-disciples, 'Let us also go, that we may die with him.'

When Jesus arrived, he found that Lazarus had already been in the tomb for four days. Now Bethany was near Jerusalem, some two miles away, and many of the Jews had come to Martha and Mary to console them about their brother. When Martha heard that Jesus was coming, she went and met him, while Mary stayed at home. Martha said to Jesus, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died. But even now I know that God will give you whatever you ask of him.' Jesus said to her, 'Your brother will rise

again.' Martha said to him, 'I know that he will rise again in the resurrection on the last day.' Jesus said to her, 'I am the resurrection and the life. Those who believe in me, even though they die, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?' She said to him, 'Yes, Lord, I believe that you are the Messiah, the Son of God, the one coming into the world.'

When she had said this, she went back and called her sister Mary, and told her privately, 'The Teacher is here and is calling for you.' And when she heard it, she got up quickly and went to him. Now Jesus had not yet come to the village, but was still at the place where Martha had met him. The Jews who were with her in the house, consoling her, saw Mary get up quickly and go out. They followed her because they thought that she was going to the tomb to weep there. When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, 'Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died.' When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved. He said, 'Where have you laid him?' They said to him, 'Lord, come and see.' Jesus began to weep. So the Jews said, 'See how he loved him!' But some of them said, 'Could not he who opened the eyes of the blind man have kept this man from dying?'

Then Jesus, again greatly disturbed, came to the tomb. It was a cave, and a stone was lying against it. Jesus said, 'Take away the stone.' Martha, the sister of the dead man, said to him, 'Lord, already there is a stench because he has been dead for four days.' Jesus said to her, 'Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?' So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upwards and said, 'Father, I thank you for having heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me.' When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, 'Lazarus, come out!' The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, 'Unbind him, and let him go.'

Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

MESSAGE "Lazarus of Bethany" an monologue by Doug Boatright (2000)

*HYMN #227 all "Breathe on Me, Breath of God"

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE... THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petitions end with: "Christ of majesty and mercy, ...**Bring your compassion to this world once more.**"

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 March goes towards Bethlehem's OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission) pledge)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE "Doxology" (Written by GW Dub Shepherd, 2006)

**Praise God throughout these forty days,
Praise Christ, Our Lord, whom God did raise,
And praise the Spirit who imparts,
God's love in Christ into our hearts. Amen**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

One: With these gifts, O God, the downhearted will be enlivened and the suffering given hope.

All: With these gifts, the faith of young persons ill be nurtured, and those of advanced years strengthened.

One: With these gifts, O God, the inner-city powerless will be given confidence, and the rural poor supported.

All: With these gifts, young adults overseas will find job training, and abused women will find an affirming community.

One: Bless these gifts as they go to work, O God.

All: Through them, the name of Jesus will be honored. 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

One: Bring us to life, O God;

All: free us from all the deadness of the past.

One: Bring us to life, O God;

All: free us to break through self-imposed limits.

One: Bring us to life, O God;

All: free us to give with abundant generosity.

One: Bring us to life, O God;

All: free us to follow Jesus faithfully.

POSTLUDE

**Elements and liturgies for today's service were used with permission from <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/> and Sparks, David. Prayers to Share: Year A, 2004.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- PIZZA PARTY with ICE CREAM SUNDAES
Sunday, April 16 following worship service. Everyone is invited.
See the sign-up sheet in the fellowship hall. Sponsored by Merry Christians
- We are still in need of delegates for the Northeast Association Annual Meeting – April 22 – 9a-2p. It will be held at Daycholah (formerly Pilgrim Center) on Green Lake, Ripon. See Randy if Interested.
- During the season of Lent, Prayer Stations will be offered on Wednesday's from 9a-7pm. The stations are self-guided and will be set up in the middle Sunday School room. Please come and engage in spiritual practice and quiet contemplation.
- Been attending awhile, but not a member? Bethlehem will be holding a "New-Member Sunday on May 21. From 8-9a we will have a brief "class" and discussion about Bethlehem. New members will be "installed" during the 9:30 worship service. Please let Pastor Randy know if you are interested in joining.

2023 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

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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:

Adeline Schmitz
Todd Lisowe
June Propson
Lucy Dreifuerst (Brian Witkowski's Grandmother)

Those struggling with health issues:

Shirley Henschel	Fred Kraemer
Bob Radder	Daisy Sippel
Darlean Rumpff	Darlene Horneck
Doreen Schmidt	Helen Henning
Tom Lefeber	Hattie Lucille
Jessica Horneck	Sandra Tesch
Dawson Horneck	Gary Steinhardt
Tom Rabe	John Buchholz

Those unable to worship with us: Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

- Other Concerns:**
- Victims of violence
 - Victims of recent natural disasters, especially victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria, and cyclone in Africa.
 - People affected by war and/or oppression (Esp. Ukraine)

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- The Installation of Rev. Nicole Herda will take place at St. Peters UCC, Kiel on Saturday, March 25 at 11am.
- Kiel High School's production of "Clue" will be staged at KHS Performing Arts Center beginning Thursday, March 30th at 7 p.m. and will conclude on Sunday, April 3rd with the 2 p.m. performance. Show times also include 7 p.m. on Friday, March 31st and Saturday, April 1st. Ticket sales are open to the public online at showtix4u.com/events/kiel. Tickets will also be available prior to each show at the box office.
- All you can Eat Potato and Buttermilk Pancake Dinner on Sunday April 30, 2023 from 3-6pm. Also Serving: Brats, Hamburgers, Applesauce, Desserts, Milk, & Coffee
Cost: \$14.00 for Adults, \$8.00 for Children 6-12 years, Free for Children 5 & Under
Zion Lutheran Church, 1702 Van Buren St., New Holstein, proceeds benefit the Zion LYF

Upcoming Class Do you have a fear of falling or losing your balance? The Aging & Disability Resource Center of the Lakeshore, along with Bethlehem UCC Church is offering Stepping On, a 7 week workshop, beginning Thursdays, April 13th-May 25th from 1:00-3:00pm. Trained leaders and community professionals guide you in recognizing your risk of falling by identifying fall hazards in the home and community, help you build the balance, strength and practical skills you need to avoid a fall, how to safely get up from a fall, identify vision, footwear and medication management risks, and how to manage safely in inclement weather. The cost is a suggested \$10 donation. Please contact the Aging & Disability Resource Center of the Lakeshore at 1-877-416-7083 for more information or to register.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 3/26: 8:00 Sunday School; 8:30a WISE TEAM; 9:30am Worship; *~Happy Birthday Doreen Schmidt!*

Monday 3/27:

Tuesday 3/28:

Wednesday 3/29: 6pm Confirmation Class; 9a-7pm Prayer Stations;

Thursday 3/30: *~Happy Anniversary Joe & Doreen Schmidt!*

Friday 3/31:

Saturday 4/1:

Sunday 4/2: 8:00 Sunday School; 9:30am Palm Sunday Worship w/ Communion

April Pantry Items:

Bottle of hand soap, dish soap or shampoo