



**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

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Sunday, September 3, 2023

Guest Worship Leader: Rev. Roy Rogers

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: Give thanks to the Holy One!

Many: The God of our ancestors is with us!

One: Give thanks to the Holy One!

Many: We call upon the name of our God, and our God responds.

One: Give thanks to the Holy One!

Many: The steadfast and faithful love of our God lasts forever!

*OPENING PRAYER

Eternal God, when we search for you, we find you. When we seek you, we find you seeking us. Your presence among us changes our circumstances and our lives. We honor and worship you as an act of devotion and discipleship. Infuse us with your Spirit that our witness and ministry may be a testimony to your everlasting love. Amen.

*HYMN #346 all

“Give Me Jesus”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Forgiving God, we acknowledge that repentance opens the door to forgiveness and transformation. We turn from our desire for comfort over compassion, easy solutions or challenging resolution, and avoidance over confrontation. We need your strength, fortitude, and conviction to overcome our fear of loss to make room for the gains of new life for ourselves and our neighbors through our generous and sacrificial living. *Time of reflection...*

WORDS OF GRACE

God is faithful to forgive and to redeem.

God will sustain us through the hard work of confronting truth about ourselves, our communities, and our world.

Receive the companionship of the Holy Spirit who leads and guides us in all truth.

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 READINGS

Deuteronomy 15: 7-11

If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the LORD your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted towards your needy neighbor. You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be. Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, ‘The seventh year, the year of remission, is near’, and therefore view your needy neighbor with hostility and give nothing; your neighbor might cry to the LORD against you, and you would incur guilt. Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake. Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, ‘Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.’

Luke 6: 20-26

Then he looked up at his disciples and said:

‘Blessed are you who are poor,
for yours is the kingdom of God.

‘Blessed are you who are hungry now,
for you will be filled.

‘Blessed are you who weep now,
for you will laugh.

‘Blessed are you when people hate you, and when they exclude you, revile you, and defame you on account of the Son of Man. Rejoice on that day and leap for joy, for surely

your reward is great in heaven; for that is what their ancestors did to the prophets.

'But woe to you who are rich,
for you have received your consolation.

'Woe to you who are full now,
for you will be hungry.

'Woe to you who are laughing now,
for you will mourn and weep.

'Woe to you when all speak well of you, for that is what their ancestors did to the false prophets.

Matthew 20: 1-16

'For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the laborers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, "You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right." So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, "Why are you standing here idle all day?" They said to him, "Because no one has hired us." He said to them, "You also go into the vineyard." When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, "Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first." When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, "These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat." But he replied to one of them, "Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?" So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'

SERMON "A Labor Day Message"

*HYMN #495 all "They'll Know we are Christians by our Love"

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

PASTORAL PRAYER... 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.

*HYMN #284 all "We Plow the Fields and Scatter"

CALL TO THE OFFERING (Jingle Change for the month of September supports the Rural Church Fellowship's CROP Walk for hunger.)

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

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Generous God, thank you for the seeding and inspiring generosity in us. May these gifts be a blessing to the ministry of this church. Multiply them and make us fruitful and faithful steward of our time, talent, and treasure.

*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

POSTLUDE

**elements of the worship service used with permission from ucc.org

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

**Please note: Doris Mae Nimmer's new phone # is 920-286-3712

**Helen Henning new address: Lakehouse Senior Living – Suite 119, 950 Rapids Rd. – Manitowoc, WI 54420 (same building, new room)

MISSION TRIP!!!

We have been invited to participate in a mission trip next summer with St. Peter's UCC and other area churches. The trip is open to 9th grade and above and will be part of ASP: Appalachia Service project. (www.asphome.org)

There will be a planning meeting on Sept. 11 at 6pm at St. Peters. Dates will be decided at that meeting. Please let Pastor Randy know if you are interested in taking part in this trip.

The WISE Committee is hosting a book study of **Blessed are the Crazy** by Rev. Sarah Lund. 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.

. **Mission Fest – Sunday, October 8th** - Lunch will be provided for everyone participating.

- 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

Bethlehem Ladies Annual Guest Night will be Tuesday, September 19th. The Guest Speaker will be from Harbor House. *Harbor House* Domestic Abuse Programs provides safe shelter and support services to survivors of domestic abuse in Northeast *Wisconsin*. The evening will begin at 5:30 with a light lunch and speaker to follow. Please invite your friends and family to attend. There is a sign-up sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

The Bethlehem Ladies are collecting items needed for the Harbor House Abuse Shelter. These items can be brought to church and placed in the basket at the entrance until Sunday, September 17th. There is a list of their current needs printed and placed by the basket at the front entrance for you to take. Thank you for your generosity!!

SEEKING FAITH MENTORS!!!

We would like to re-implement the "faith mentors" program for our confirmation students. Are you willing to accept the challenge? We need three mentors for our students this year.

What is required: Willingness to meet one time per month with a student to discuss various aspects of faith. Have an open mind – be a good listener... be supportive.

What is NOT required: extensive knowledge of the bible, faith, etc. There are no correct answers and your job will not be to "correct" the student or say the right things. Just listen and be supportive.

Please let Pastor Randy know if you are willing to consider this challenge. It will be beneficial to YOU, as well as the student.

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

****On September 10, we will be having a "Blessing of the Backpacks." All students are invited to bring their backpacks to church for the blessing.**

Community Announcements:

The Kiel Area Food Pantry, Inc (which provides food to anyone within the Kiel School District Area), has been experiencing the largest needs ever faced in our community. Last year in November they hit 42 households, in the last two months more than 80 households have needed support.

The pantry is ecumenical-- open to everyone. There is a huge need in our community. Each month boxes include cheese donated from Hennings and Sargento, butter donated by Pine River Dairy --- the pantry then purchases meat to add to the box. The months that normally see the most need are October, November and December.

The pantry has served an all-time high of 80+ households. If anyone does not want to do shopping, or would like to help donate money towards meat, cash donations are also welcome.

Kiel Area Community Food Pantry Inc Most needed items

Food:

1. Boxed Cereal (Adult or Children)
2. Canned Fruits /Applesauce
3. Hearty Soups (Chunky/Progresso)
4. Jam/Jelly/Peanut Butter
5. Pasta Sauce
6. Boxed Rice
7. Hamburger Helper
- 8 Baked Pork and Beans
9. Instant Potatoes
10. Knorr Side Dishes
- 11 Stuffing/Yams/Pie Filling/Cranberries (Thanksgiving is coming!)

Other Personal Care Items:

1. Kleenex
2. Toilet Paper
3. Toothpaste
4. Bar Soap
5. Shampoo/Conditioner

They currently have adequate supplies of Vegetables and Pasta.

- Wed. Oct 4 - Drive-Thru Chili Supper @ Bethel UCC – 11a-6:30pm



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Joys:

A joy for the birth of Nova Rosalyn Henning on Aug 23, 2023
Parents are Zachary and Kristi Henning. Proud Grandparents
are Kerry and Barb Henning!

Families who have lost loved ones:

Gaiden Schultz (Garrett's sister)

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 Voland

Molly

Mary Beth Molitor

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

Other Concerns:

Those affected by Hawaiian wildfires.

Those affected by hurricanes and tropical storms.

Those affected by recent gun violence, especially in Florida.

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 9/3: 9:30am Worship- NO Communion; ~Happy Birthday Brian Witkowski and Wyatt Snyder!

Monday 9/4:

Tuesday 9/5: 5pm Loads of Love Laundry Ministry

Wednesday 9/6:

Thursday 9/7:

Friday 9/8:

Saturday 9/9: ~Happy Birthday Lori Schmitt!

Sunday 9/10: 8am Sunday School; 8:30 Book Study; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion;

September Pantry Items:

Package of Toilet Paper or Paper Toweling

A blessing for the start of a new school year – by Kate Bowler

The year is tilting
toward the start of school again,
but truth be told,
we're not ready.

We're still hanging on to summer,
to the promise it held
for long-awaited connections and celebrations,
for refreshment for our bodies and souls
in water and sky and color and sunlight,
and all those little moments given to us
where we could linger just a little longer.

Now that it's almost over,
we don't want to let it go.
The beauty. The freedom.
All that was life-giving.

God, could you help us stretch it,
extend it,
and maybe even blend it
into this coming school year?

Parents, students, teachers, all,
may your newly-structured days
breathe with creativity,
your new duties be infused with delight.

As you write on those
fresh new calendars
may you trust that your plans
are a lot like magic ink.

Much may seem to
disappear into obscurity,
but whatever is done in love
will remain.