

**BETHLEHEM UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**



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**Sunday, January 14, 2024
Second Sunday after Epiphany**

Worship Leader: Steven Voland

Organist: Kathy Bowe

If listening from your car, please tune your car radio to 101.3 FM

***= Please rise in body or spirit**

CENTERING BREATH PRAYER: as you inhale, say the first part of the prayer to yourself, and say the second part as you exhale. Repeat 5x

Lord, when you call to me :: open my ears that I may hear your voice

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP: #148 Refrain

**O star of wonder, star of night, Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, still proceeding, Guide us to thy perfect light**

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP: (Inspired by Psalm 139) (a)

One: We praise you, O God, for you are our God, and we are your people.

Many: Wonderful are your works, O God, we know them very well!

One: Search us and know us, Creator, remove us from shadows into your presence.

Many: Wonderful are your works, O God, we know them very well!

One: Place your hand upon us, Gracious One, as we worship you and minister in your name.

Many: Wonderful are your works, O God, we know them very well!

*OPENING PRAYER: ^(a)

Sovereign One, we acknowledge your presence among us. Stir up the gifts you have planted among us. Hold us in your care and present a mirror before us so that we may know ourselves as you have known us. Strengthen us in your mercy and let your grace propel us to renewal and righteousness. Lift us so that might arise in spirit and in truth for your glory. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #325

“Just as I Am, Without One Plea”

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE ^(a)

Holy God, 1 Corinthians 6:12 reminds us that “All things are lawful for me, but not all things are beneficial. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be dominated by anything.” You have created us in your holy and divine image. We pray to reflect your goodness in the world. We confess that we have engaged in actions and attitudes contrary to your kingdom, and we ask for wisdom, guidance, and fortitude to be the people you have called us to be. Amen. *(Time for silent reflection)*

WORDS OF GRACE ^(a)

Beloved creation of God, the Holy One knows us fully, completely, and affirmatively from the secret places of our innermost parts. Let us receive the knowing as a gift of assurance that God’s grace is sufficient for new life. **God will abide with us as we strive to follow the way of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE # 121 (refrain) “Gloria”

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

1 Samuel 3:1-20

Now the boy Samuel was ministering to the LORD under Eli. The word of the LORD was rare in those days; visions were not widespread.

At that time Eli, whose eyesight had begun to grow dim so that he could not see, was lying down in his room; the lamp of God had not yet gone out, and Samuel was lying down in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was. Then the LORD called, ‘Samuel! Samuel!’ and he said, ‘Here I am!’ and ran to Eli, and said, ‘Here I am, for you

called me.' But he said, 'I did not call; lie down again.' So he went and lay down. The LORD called again, 'Samuel!' Samuel got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' But he said, 'I did not call, my son; lie down again.' Now Samuel did not yet know the LORD, and the word of the LORD had not yet been revealed to him. The LORD called Samuel again, a third time. And he got up and went to Eli, and said, 'Here I am, for you called me.' Then Eli perceived that the LORD was calling the boy. Therefore Eli said to Samuel, 'Go, lie down; and if he calls you, you shall say, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening." ' So Samuel went and lay down in his place.

Now the LORD came and stood there, calling as before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' And Samuel said, 'Speak, for your servant is listening.' Then the LORD said to Samuel, 'See, I am about to do something in Israel that will make both ears of anyone who hears of it tingle. On that day I will fulfil against Eli all that I have spoken concerning his house, from beginning to end. For I have told him that I am about to punish his house for ever, for the iniquity that he knew, because his sons were blaspheming God, and he did not restrain them. Therefore I swear to the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be expiated by sacrifice or offering for ever.'

Samuel lay there until morning; then he opened the doors of the house of the LORD. Samuel was afraid to tell the vision to Eli. But Eli called Samuel and said, 'Samuel, my son.' He said, 'Here I am.' Eli said, 'What was it that he told you? Do not hide it from me. May God do so to you and more also, if you hide anything from me of all that he told you.' So Samuel told him everything and hid nothing from him. Then he said, 'It is the LORD; let him do what seems good to him.'

As Samuel grew up, the LORD was with him and let none of his words fall to the ground. And all Israel from Dan to Beer-sheba knew that Samuel was a trustworthy prophet of the LORD.

Psalm 139: 1-6, 13-18

- ¹ O LORD, you have searched me and known me.
- ² **You know when I sit down and when I rise up;
you discern my thoughts from far away.**
- ³ You search out my path and my lying down,
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- ⁴ **Even before a word is on my tongue,
O LORD, you know it completely.**
- ⁵ You hem me in, behind and before,
and lay your hand upon me.

**⁶ Such knowledge is too wonderful for me;
it is so high that I cannot attain it.**

¹³ For it was you who formed my inward parts;
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

**¹⁴ I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.
Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.**

¹⁵ My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret,
intricately woven in the depths of the earth.

**¹⁶ Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written
all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed.**

¹⁷ How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God!
How vast is the sum of them!

**¹⁸ I try to count them—they are more than the sand;
I come to the end—I am still with you.**

John 1:43-51

The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, 'Follow me.' Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. Philip found Nathanael and said to him, 'We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth.' Nathanael said to him, 'Can anything good come out of Nazareth?' Philip said to him, 'Come and see.' When Jesus saw Nathanael coming towards him, he said of him, 'Here is truly an Israelite in whom there is no deceit!' Nathanael asked him, 'Where did you come to know me?' Jesus answered, 'I saw you under the fig tree before Philip called you.' Nathanael replied, 'Rabbi, you are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!' Jesus answered, 'Do you believe because I told you that I saw you under the fig tree? You will see greater things than these.' And he said to him, 'Very truly, I tell you, you will see heaven opened and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of Man.'

SERMON

*HYMN #541

"Here I am, Lord"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE...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.

OFFERTORY (Jingle change will go to the Mission Fund which supports Loads of Love, Mission Fest, and other outreach opportunities)

One: For centuries, God has called people to give their lives serving God's holy purposes. May the gifts we offer today also serve God's purposes in the church and the world, for the sake of Christ our Lord. ^(b)

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE Tune "Old Hundredth"

**Oh God, may we who bear your name,
By gentle love your grace proclaim.
Christ's gift of peace on earth declare,
And your anointing Spirit share. Amen**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION ^(b)

God of new possibilities, in Christ you create a future for each of us, inviting us to flourish in our faith. Use us and the gifts we offer to create new possibilities for those who are uncertain about what the future holds. For we trust that you hold the future for us all. 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 {c}

Jesus said, "Follow me," so Philip followed. Jesus says to us, "Follow me!" will we follow?

We do not always know where Jesus will lead. But we hear the call, and we intend to follow.

Philip found Nathaniel and led him to Jesus. There are many we know whom Jesus is seeking.

It is often difficult to share our faith with friends. But we hear the call, and we intend to invite them.

Jesus promised, "You will see greater things than I have shown you." We are Christ's messengers of revelation today.

Wonderful are the works of our God. Christ is our mentor, our savior, and friend. Amen

POSTLUDE

Elements of today's worship used with permission from (a) ucc.org, (b)

<https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>, (c) Baylor, Lavon. Led by Love: Worship Resources for Year B, United Church Press: Cleveland, OH. 1996.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Packets of 10 tickets for the 2024 Chili Supper are available in the Fellowship Hall. Please sign out for packets which you can sell. Payment is due by February 7, 2024.
- 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 signup sheet with all the dates for the upcoming year is in the Fellowship Hall. Please consider helping us out. Thank you!!
- The Second Annual *Rural Church Fellowship Sheepshead Tournament* will be held on Sunday, Feb 18 at 1pm @ Bethlehem. Admission is a non-perishable food item. All proceeds benefit area food pantries.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Drive-Thru Chili Supper – Wed. Jan. 31 – 4pm-7pm – Immanuel UCC
- InCourage Domestic Abuse Shelter of Manitowoc is hosting a charity event on Sat. Feb 24 – info on the bulletin board in the fellowship hall.

2024 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

LOOKING FOR LITURGISTS!

Pastor 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.

Dear Church! Thanks so much for your love and Christmas wishes over the holidays! I especially appreciate the generous "bonus" and scrip voucher. I feel very fortunate to be serving the people of Bethlehem! ~Pastor Randy

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 1/14: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship; ~Happy Birthday Shirley Henschel and Mekenzie Biwan!

Monday 1/15: ~Happy Birthday Judy Mueller and Bill Biwan!

Tuesday 1/16:

Wednesday 1/17: 6pm Confirmation Class;

Thursday 1/18:

Friday 1/19: Confirmation Retreat – Daycholah; ~Happy Birthday Hailey Wirtz!

Saturday 1/20: Confirmation Retreat – Daycholah

Sunday 1/21: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship; **SPIRIT NEWS DUE**

**January Pantry Items:
Can of Soup**



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Mike Stutte

Those struggling with health issues:

Mason Kannell

Sarah Arnold

Heidi Konen

Brenda Voland

Darlene Horneck

Helen Henning

Tom Lefeber

Jessica Horneck

Dawson Horneck

Elizabeth Quackenboss (Nicole Watson's Gmother)

Jaxxen Kane

Tom Brickbauer

Marie Rietbrock

Daisy Sippel

Gene Radder

Dana (Melissa K's sister)

Mary Beth Molitor

Crystal

Gary Steinhardt

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer

Other Concerns:

Those displaced by the recent apartment fire in Kiel.

Those affected by wars in Israel and Ukraine, and others globally.

NAMI Fox Valley

Do you live with a mental health condition? Join us for our upcoming Peer-to-Peer class!

Peer-to-Peer is a free, 8-session course that focuses on mental health recovery and mental wellness. The course provides participants with comprehensive information on mental illnesses and teaches strategies for personal and interpersonal awareness, coping skills, and self-care strategies.

The class will be held Wednesdays, January 24-March 13, 2024 from 6:00-8:00 PM via Zoom.

Space is limited and registration is required. For more information or to register, visit: www.namifoxvalley.org/P2P