



**If any want to
become my followers,
let them deny themselves
and take up their cross
and follow me.**

Mark 8:34, NRSV

BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, February 25, 2024

Second Sunday in Lent

Worship Leader: Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Kathy Bowe

If listening from your car, please tune 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

Out of the depths I call to you :: O Lord, hear my voice

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP: #555 "Sanctuary"

WELCOME and ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

*CALL TO WORSHIP:

We gather together, seeking life in all its fullness.

We gather in God's name, longing for truth and hope.

We are drawn by the words of our Creator and Redeemer.

We seek God's Spirit to guide us.

Come and worship the God who seeks us out.

We will worship God, the Source of our lives, who is worthy of all our praise.

*OPENING PRAYER:

Loving God, Creator, Christ, and Guide, you speak words of life to us.

In you we find our hearts' desire; by your grace we are saved. When the way forward is unclear, you shed light. When times are difficult, you stir courage

and hope. Our deepest longing is to know you, and to be known by you. Draw near to us in our time of worship, O God, and open the way before us, so that we may follow Jesus without wavering, trusting him to lead us. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #537 all

“Lift High the Cross”

PRAYER OF CONFESSION.

Although following you brings joy, O God, we confess the way is sometimes hard for us. We get tired and would prefer an easier road. Some days the task of loving others seems hard, and we ignore the needs of our neighbors. Forgive us when our commitment to you wavers, and we take that easier path. Strengthen our determination to follow where you lead and renew our energy to serve in Jesus’ name. Amen (time of silence)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Friends, believe the good news! We are justified by God’s grace which has come to us through Jesus Christ.

By grace, we are forgiven and set free to find new life in Christ. Thanks be to God!

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #558

“Gloria Patri”

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Romans 4:13-25

For the promise that he would inherit the world did not come to Abraham or to his descendants through the law but through the righteousness of faith. If it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath; but where there is no law, neither is there violation. For this reason it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (for he is the father of all of us, as it is written, ‘I have made you the father of many nations’)—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. Hoping against hope, he believed that he would become ‘the father of many nations’, according to what was said, ‘So numerous shall your descendants be.’ He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was already as good as dead (for he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, being fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised. Therefore his faith ‘was reckoned to him as righteousness.’ Now the

words, 'it was reckoned to him', were written not for his sake alone, but for ours also. It will be reckoned to us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was handed over to death for our trespasses and was raised for our justification.

Mark 8:31-38

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, 'Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things.'

He called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, 'If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life? Indeed, what can they give in return for their life? Those who are ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of them the Son of Man will also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.'

SERMON

*HYMN #422 all "Lead Us, O Father"

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.

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY (Jingle change goes to the Sunday School's Leprosy Collection)

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

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Lord Jesus, you challenge your followers to give to God like you did, without counting the cost. Use these gifts to continue your ministry of

healing in this hurting world. And grant us courage so that our lives speak to others of our love for you and for 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.*

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Bethlehem UCC is hosting a free presentation on Advanced Directives on Tuesday, Feb 27th at 6:30pm. Representatives from Froedtert Medical will be explaining the importance of living wills and medical powers of attorney. If you were suddenly unable to make your own medical decisions and didn't have advanced directives legally in place, your medical decisions would be made by the courts. Other important “end of life” decisions should be put in place as well. The legal paperwork from the state of Wisconsin will be available. Invite your friends. All are encouraged to attend.
- Bethlehem will be having a “GAME DAY” after church on Sunday, March 3. Bring your favorite board games, a deck of cards, etc., and let's have some fellowship time! Snacks will be served.
- Summer Camp time is Approaching! Daycholah Center and other UCCl camps are booking for campers and ALSO hiring staff for the summer! (Perfect for college students!) Please let Pastor Randy if you'd like more information about summer camp.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS

- There are still victims of the Kiel apartment fire in need of short-term housing. If you, or someone you know has apartments or other rentals available, please let Pastor Randy know. Currently, material goods are NOT needed.
- Sunday, Feb. 25 - Soup Cook-Off – Supporting the youth mission trip of area UCC churches – enter a soup – be a “taster” – details on the table in the Fellowship Hall.
- Sunday, March 3 – Drive Thru Chili Dinner – 11a-1pm – St. James UCC - Newton

- March 8 and 9 -Mission and service opportunity: Feed my Starving Children –@ First United Lutheran Church – Sheboygan. Info on “Missions” bulletin board.
- Do you or someone you know provide care for an elderly parent or other family member? The Manitowoc County Aging and Disability Resource Center is holding “The Powerful Tools for Caregivers” workshop. The workshop will be held on Wednesdays from 9a-11:30am – beginning March 13 and going to April 17- at the Manitowoc Sr. Center. Please see the bulletin board for details.
- Saturday, April 6. – Women’s day at Zion Lutheran, New Holstein. Details on the bulletin board.

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

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Deacon/Secretary - Kathy Bowe (920)894-7243 LandKBowe@outlook.com

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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:

Families who have lost loved ones:

Those struggling with health issues:

Mason Kannell

Sarah Arnold

Heidi Konen

Brenda Voland

Darlene Horneck

Helen Henning

Tom Lefeber

Jessica Horneck

Dawson Horneck

Nancy – (Shirley’s daughter in law)

Jaxxen Kane

Tom Brickbauer

Marie Rietbrock

Daisy Sippel

Renee

Dana

Mary Beth Molitor

Crystal

Gary Steinhardt

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Nimmer



Lenten Schedule: (For your refrigerator)

Wednesday, February 28 – 9a-6pm Prayer Stations; 6pm Service Project; 6pm Confirmation Class

Wednesday, March 6 – 9a-6pm Prayer Stations; 6:30pm Mid-week worship

Wednesday, March 13 – 9a-6pm Prayer Stations; 6pm Service Project; 6pm Confirmation Class

Wednesday, March 20 – 9a-6pm Prayer Stations; 6:30pm Mid-week worship

Thursday, March 28 – 6pm Maundy Thursday Sedar meal worship

Friday, March 29 – 6pm Good Friday Worship @ St. Peters UCC-Kiel

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 2/25: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship; 11a-2p Soup cook-off at Laacks Hall, Johnsonville. Supports mission trip of area UCC churches: *Happy Birthday Julia Gabriele!*

Monday 2/26:

Tuesday 2/27: 6:30pm Advanced Directives presentation

Wednesday 2/28: 9a-6pm Prayer Stations; 6p Confirmation Class; 6pm Lenten Service Project; ~*Happy Birthday Alexis Horneck and Karen Schlegel!*

Thursday 2/29:

Friday 3/1: ~*Happy Birthday Peyton Koppenhaver and Greyson Hoban!*

Saturday 3/2:

Sunday 3/3: 8am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship; w/ Communion

**March Pantry Items:
Box of Pasta, Noodle, Rice or Crackers**