



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, August 25, 2024
Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Worship Leader: Bonnie Ziegler

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

The Lord will save me :: and I will sing all the days of my life

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #557 v. 1 "I Just Came to Praise the Lord"

I just came to praise the Lord, I just came to praise the Lo—rd

I just came to praise his Ho--ly Name, I just came to praise the Lord

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP:** (Inspired by Psalm 84)

One: O Holy one of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

Many: We long to be in your beautiful assembly. Our hearts sing for joy!

One: O Holy one of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

Many: You keep the sparrow and the spring. You sustain the splendor of creation.

One: O Holy one of hosts, happy is everyone who trusts in you.

Many: In you, we go from strength to strength. You hear our prayers, bestow blessings and honor, and withhold no good thing. Praise our God!

*OPENING PRAYER:

Lovely God, you abide with us. We acknowledge your presence among us with peace, trust, and thanksgiving. It is good to be with you. It is good to be with one another. Fill us with your Spirit and revel in our worship. May this time give you honor and fortify us as your people, your ambassadors, and your agents of love and hope in the world. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN: #7

“Praise to the Lord, the Almighty”

PRAYER FOR TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE:

Gracious and Holy God, speak to us. So often our prayer time is consumed by our words...

when what we need most is your gentle nudges and your bold challenge. Let us hear from you. (Moment of silence.)

As you continue to speak, prepare our hearts and minds to receive your wisdom, correction, and confirmation.

Transform us for your glory, for our hope, and for the world. Amen.

WORDS OF GRACE

Beloved, even when God seems silent, God is still speaking, listening, and moving in our lives. Know that every moment of attention we center upon the Holy One is faithful stewardship of our time.

God, the Redeemer, will honor our seeking, trusting, and listening with blessing, hope, and grace. All praise be given to God! Amen

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #358

“Only Believe”

Only believe, only believe;

All things are possible, only believe;

Only believe, only believe;

All things are possible, only believe.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Psalm 34:15-22 - Read responsively

¹⁵ The eyes of the Lord are on the righteous,
and his ears are open to their cry.

¹⁶ **The face of the Lord is against evildoers,
to cut off the remembrance of them from the earth.**

¹⁷ When the righteous cry for help, the Lord hears,

and rescues them from all their troubles.

**18 The Lord is near to the broken-hearted,
and saves the crushed in spirit.**

¹⁹ Many are the afflictions of the righteous,
but the Lord rescues them from them all.

**20 He keeps all their bones;
not one of them will be broken.**

²¹ Evil brings death to the wicked,
and those who hate the righteous will be condemned.

**22 The Lord redeems the life of his servants;
none of those who take refuge in him will be condemned.**

Ephesians 6:10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breastplate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

John 6:56-69

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum.

When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.'

Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

SERMON

*HYMN #481

"Christ is Made the Sure Foundation"

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

Ephesians 6 encourages us to "be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power; put on the whole armor of God, so that you may be able to stand."

Let us stand against the powers of evil that would create barriers to our compassion and generosity to meeting the needs of our community.

Let us stand against the powers that would convince us that we lack time to love and serve God with the talents, skills, and passions endowed to us by Creator.

Let us stand in solidarity and perseverance with the Living God who gives generously, lovingly, and abundantly.

OFFERTORY (Jingle Change for the month of August goes to Bethlehem's Mission and Service Sunday Project – Clean-up buckets for disaster relief.)

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE**

“Give Thanks”

**Give thanks with a grateful heart
Give thanks to the Holy One
Give thanks because He’s given Jesus Christ,
His Son (2 times)**

And now...

**let the weak say, “I am strong”
Let the poor say, “I am rich
Because of what the Lord has done
for us” (2 times)**

Give thanks... (2 times)

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Strong and Giving God, receive our gifts of time, talent, and financial resources for the building of your kindom on earth as it is in heaven. May we give with a spirit of courage, trust, and empathy. May our faithful stewardship receive confirmation through changed lives and renewed communities for your glory. 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

**Go in peace, Holding onto steadfast hope in a God who does good things
Who calls us as ambassadors and witnesses to the kindom
Who sustains and supplies us
Whose work is done through our hands, our voice, and our lives
And who remains with us now and forever. **Amen.****

POSTLUDE

****This morning’s liturgies were used with permission from <https://ucc.org/worship-way/>**

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Pastor Randy will be out of the state Aug. 29-Sept. 3. Please contact Pastor Nicole of St. Peter's UCC with any pastoral care needs. (920-242-8308)
- Once again, **we are seeking individuals willing to be Confirmation Mentors.** Your commitment is one meeting per month with your student. What's required: Your willingness to be accepting, a good listener, and supportive. What's NOT required: any special biblical or theological knowledge or the desire to impress your beliefs on the student. The job description is to be a mentor and friend, not a teacher. Please see Pastor Randy if you're willing to accept the challenge!
- On Sunday, Sept 8, we will conduct a **Blessing of the Backpacks!** Any student, young or otherwise, is invited to bring their bookbags, backpacks, etc. If you're not a student and just want your "work bag" blessed, bring it along!!
- **The United Church Men and Women will hold their annual scholarship banquet** at St. John's UCC in Sheboygan on Thursday, October 24th at 6:30pm. WI Conference Minister Rev. Franz Rigert is the keynote speaker. Please see Pastor Randy for tickets. They are \$20 each.
- The Bethlehem Ladies are continuing to collect items for the Harbor House woman's shelter. Information and collection site is located near the church entrance.
- On **Mission and Service Sunday** in September, we will be putting together disaster clean up kits for Church World Service. An example kit has been created. If you wish to contribute, please buy the EXACT item. They are somewhat fussy about the items. You can also donate money and the "team" will purchase the necessary supplies.
- Ready to talk about Christmas??? We are once again organizing the "United Church Choir" to perform on Dec. 8. This a community choir with St Peter's UCC and other area UCC churches. See Randy if interested!

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS -See flyers in fellowship hall for more details

- **Faith in the Fall:** Sun. Sept 8 – 10a-2pm Music Festival at Our Shepherd's UCC in Howards Grove (see flyer)
- **Upcoming NAMI Events:** If interested, Let Pastor Randy know and he will forward you the email with registration links
 - Desk Yoga – Thursday, Aug 29 – 12-12:30pm via Zoom
 - NAMI Walk – Sat. Oct 5 – 12-2pm – Kiwanis Park, Sheboygan



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Joys:

Those Grieving:

Those struggling with health issues:

Will Mathes	Doris Mae Ninmer
Jeanette Wriedt	Wanda Matzdorf
Brad Westphalen	Chad Jeanty
Art Matzdorf	Jessica Horneck
Nancy Zimmermann	Jim Markelz
Gary Steinhardt	Marie Rietbrock
Shari	Tom Lefeber
Heidi Konen	Mary Beth Molitor
Dawson Horneck	Darlene Horneck

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin and Doris Mae Ninmer
Helen Henning

ASP 2025 FUNDRAISER

Hi friends! My name is Hayden Woods, and I was one of the fourteen that went to West Virginia earlier this summer on the **Appalachia Service Project (ASP)** mission trip. I had a humbling and rewarding experience. I plan on attending the 2025 ASP mission trip next summer. I am partnering with *Pampered Chef* to raise funds during their double donations for a cause in the month of August. To make the trip in 2025 more affordable to anyone that would like to join us, we need your help!! Visit the link provided or scan the QR code to shop the Pampered Chef Website that is linked to our ASP fundraiser. Payment is made on the Pampered Chef's secure site, and your items will be mailed directly to you. The best part is up to 30% of sales will be donated back to ASP!

Thank you in advance for your generosity. I encourage you to share the link with others to increase the opportunity of this gift of service with ASP.

If you need assistance, or have questions, please don't hesitate to call our consultant Mary Beth Woods. 920-242-1212. Orders are due by August 29.

<https://www.pamperedchef.com/party/haydenwoods0810>



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

Get Comfortable! Bethlehem has a new “lounge” located in the middle Sunday School room. Comfortable seating! Coffee! Books and Games!
Feel free to relax or meet for conversation.
Before church - After church – While your kids are at Sunday School!

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today Sunday 8/25: 9:00am Worship

Monday 8/26: ~

Tuesday 8/27: ~Happy Birthday Tasha Rabe!

Wednesday 8/28:

Thursday 8/29: Happy Anniversary Rich & Lori Schmitt!

Friday 8/30: ~Happy Birthday Lee Watson!

Saturday 8/31:

Sunday 9/1: 9:00am Worship

**September Pantry Items:
Toilet Paper or Paper Towels**