



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Sunday, September 29, 2024

Nineteenth Sunday After Pentecost

Worship Leader: Pastor Randy Koppenhaver

Organist: Polly Jeanty

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

Expose our broken systems, Lord :: save us by the power of your cross

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:**

One: You call us to worship, O God; you call us to prayer.

All: As we express our thanks, as we pray for the troubled, as we confess our shortcomings, you hear us.

One: You call us to worship, O God; you inspire us to praise.

All: As we sing the hymns, as we respond in the psalms, you join with us.

One: You call us worship, O God; you call us to hear the Word.

All: As we listen to the scriptures, as we are touched by the Word proclaimed, you speak to us.

One: You call us to worship, O God

All: As we gather in your presence, your love unites us.

*OPENING PRAYER:

One: If God is with us,

All: we will be able to bring our thanksgivings to church, but also our worries.

One: If God is with us,

All: we will be able to enjoy the laughter of children, but also hear the concerns of older folk.

One: If God is with us,

All: we will be able to consider the needs of this faith community, but also the needs of the oppressed far from here.

One: If God is with us,

All: the impact of Jesus' teaching will come home to us, but his cross-death will face us with new realities.

One: *If* God is with us?

All: God is with us! Amen.

*OPENING HYMN: #48

“Love Divine, All Loves Excelling”

PRAYER OF ASPIRATION:

One: What is gained for God is worth the sacrifice.

All: Acts of compassion and deeds of caring are worth the time taken from free-time and leisure.

One: What is gained for God is worth the sacrifice.

All: Words that speak of justice, letters that call for freedom are worth the opposition and the anger aroused.

One: What is gained for God is worth the sacrifice.

All: Work as a part of the faith community; teamwork to help the young, the challenged, and the infirm is worth more than going it alone.

One: What is gained for God is worth the sacrifice.

All: Following the Way of Christ, giving priority to prayer and praise is worth the ridicule, is worth comparison with the world's values.

(Brief silent reflection)

WORDS OF GRACE

One: We follow Jesus Christ, who sacrificed his life so that evil would be exposed and God's love would triumph.

All: The testing of Jesus, the fickleness of his friends, and his death on the cross reveal the small scale of our sacrifice.

One: Are we ready to renew our faithfulness? Are we ready to walk the tough and costly path?

All: We are ready!

One: Peace is ours. Find joy in a fresh start.

All: Thanks be 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 19:7-14

7 The law of the Lord is perfect
and revives the soul; *
the testimony of the Lord is sure
and gives wisdom to the innocent.

**8 The statutes of the Lord are just
and rejoice the heart; ***

**the commandment of the Lord is clear
and gives light to the eyes.**

9 The fear of the Lord is clean
and endures for ever; *
the judgments of the Lord are true
and righteous altogether.

**10 More to be desired are they than gold,
more than much fine gold, ***

**sweeter far than honey,
than honey in the comb.**

11 By them also is your servant enlightened, *
and in keeping them there is great reward.

**12 Who can tell how often he offends? *
cleanse me from my secret faults.**

13 Above all, keep your servant from presumptuous sins;
let them not get dominion over me; *
then shall I be whole and sound,
and innocent of a great offense.

**14 Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my
heart be acceptable in your sight, ***

O Lord, my strength and my redeemer.

James 5:13-20

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective. Elijah was a human being like us, and he prayed fervently that it might not rain, and for three years and six months it did not rain on the earth. Then he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain and the earth yielded its harvest.

My brothers and sisters, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and is brought back by another, you should know that whoever brings back a sinner from wandering will save the sinner's soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

Mark 9:38-50

John said to him, 'Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he was not following us.' But Jesus said, 'Do not stop him; for no one who does a deed of power in my name will be able soon afterwards to speak evil of me. Whoever is not against us is for us. For truly I tell you, whoever gives you a cup of water to drink because you bear the name of Christ will by no means lose the reward.

'If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were hung around your neck and you were thrown into the sea. If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life lame than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell.' And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

'For everyone will be salted with fire. Salt is good; but if salt has lost its saltiness, how can you season it? Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace with one another.'

CHILDREN'S TIME

SERMON

*HYMN #359

"Blessed Assurance"

PASTORAL PRAYER...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.

SUNG PRAYER RESPONSE

**Open our eyes Lord
We want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch Him
And say that we love Him.**

**Open our ears Lord
And help us to listen,
Open our eyes Lord
We want to see Jesus.**

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY (Jingle Change for the month of September supports the Rural Church Fellowship's CROP WALK)

***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**

**One: You have gifted us, O God, with wisdom, compassion, and the ability to love.
Bless these gifts, that through them**

**All: those who are perplexed may find wisdom,
those who are distressed may find compassion,
and those who are rejected may find love.**

One: We pray in the name of Jesus the Giver.

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

One: The God who called you to this place of worship sends you out to proclaim the Good News to your small corner of the world.

All: We will go in hope, for God goes before us.

We will go in joy, for God is our companion.

We will go with courage, for God believes in us.

We will go in peace, for God's peace will keep us eternally secure.

One: In God's presence and knowing Christ's love, you have nothing to fear and eternal to gain!

POSTLUDE

**This morning's responsive liturgies are from: Sparks, David, Year B Prayers to Share, Woodlake Books; Kelowna, British Columbia, 2002.

Prayers from <https://presbyterian.ca/worship/>

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- Thank you to Jen Marten from Immanuel UCC for educating our community about their food pantry. Bethlehem will be holding a “Thanksgiving Drive” to support the clients served by Immanuel's food pantry at Thanksgiving time. During the month of October, please bring the following items. You can also donate \$\$ or scrip cards that will be used to purchase perishable items.
 - Boxed mashed potatoes
 - Green beans
 - Corn
 - Canned yams
 - Jello
 - Marshmallows (for the yams)
 - Pie filling - pumpkin or apple
 - (The pantry has adequate stuffing mix, cranberry sauce, and gravy)

- **The Rural Church Fellowship CROP WALK** will be held on Sunday, Oct 6 starting at 11:45. The walk for hunger will begin in Kiel City Park behind St. Peter's UCC. ANYONE can walk in the event. Please see Pastor Randy if you'd like to walk and collect donations. Bethlehem's confirmation students are also participating. Please support them as you can!
- **Appalachia Service Project Youth Mission Trip** (for 9th grade and up) will be held June 21-28, 2025. There will be a meeting at St. Peter's UCC on Monday, Oct 7. At 6pm. Commitment to the trip will be required at that time. Please let Pastor Randy know if you're interested.
- **Adult Mission Trip Organizational Meeting** – Wednesday, October 9 – 6pm at St. Peter's UCC. If interested and cannot attend the meeting, let Pastor Randy know.
- **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. (Pastor Randy will be receiving a scholarship at this meeting.) Please see Pastor Randy for tickets. They are \$20 each.

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS -See flyers in fellowship hall for more details

- **Harbor House of Calumet County is holding a “Light the Way” vigil** on Tuesday, Oct 1 at 5:30 pm at Klinkner Park in Chilton. Pastor Randy will be giving the closing remarks and prayer. Flyer posted.
- **Upcoming NAMI Events:** If interested, Let Pastor Randy know and he will forward you the email with registration links
 - NAMI Walk – Sat. Oct 5 – 12-2pm – Kiwanis Park, Sheboygan
- **Cardboard City 2024: Raising awareness of Homelessness in Manitowoc County** Oct 12 – 4-10pm, First Presbyterian Church, 502 N. 8th Street, Manitowoc. For a firsthand experience, you can also sleep overnight in a cardboard box, tent, or in your car. Minimum pledge is \$20. All proceeds support agencies that assist the unhoused. See flyer for more details.
- **Ham Dinner** - Sunday, Oct 20, 11a-12:30pm – ST. James UCC- Newton – Carryout only. \$14/meal – See flyer
- **“The Singular They”** an educational event to help persons interested in better understanding issues of gender identity will be held at Bethel UCC on October 22 at 6:30pm. Billed as “a casual safe space for adults to ask tough questions and acquire tools and information to better understand and advocate for all God's people.”
- **100th Anniversary Celebration Concert** – Grace UCC – Kohler – Sunday, November 10 at 1pm. Refreshments following. See Flyer.



Those in our thoughts and prayers:

Those Grieving:

Family of Doris Mae Ninmer

Those struggling with health issues:

Will Mathes

Butch Waack

Jill Wehmeyer-Sheets

Nancy Zimmermann

Brad Westphalen

Jessica Horneck

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 Ninmer

Helen Henning

Other: Those affected by hurricane Helene

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

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Treasurer - Jane Umland (920)286-2175 jm59umland@gmail.com

Pastor - Randy Koppenhaver (920)286-2531 randynmel5@gmail.com

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today, Sunday 9/29: 8:00 am Sunday School; 8:00 am Confirmation; 9:30am Worship

Monday 9/30: ~Happy Birthday Chad Jeanty! Happy Anniversary Dan & Amy Wempner!

Tuesday 10/1:

Wednesday 10/2:

Thursday 10/3:

Friday 10/4: ~Happy Birthday Kerry Henning!

Saturday 10/5:

Sunday 10/6: 8:00 am Sunday School; 9:30am Worship w/ Communion; 11:45 – Crop Walk @ Kiel City Park

**October Pantry Items:
Cleaning Supplies**