



BETHLEHEM UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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**Sunday, May 25, 2025
Sixth Sunday of Eastertide**

Worship Leader: Rev. 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

Create in me clean heart :: Renew the spirit within me!

RINGING OF THE BELLS

CHORAL CALL TO WORSHIP #554

"Holy Ground"

We are standing on holy ground, And I know that there are angels all around

Let us praise Jesus now, We are standing in his presence on holy ground

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

One: God, strengthen our faith

ALL: by firing up our imaginations

One: Because we know the Holy Creator works through us

ALL: So we can begin to stitch back together our community!

One: Powerful images are not empty or without meaning

ALL: but true symbols that guide us to probe this war-filled world.

One: Isn't this why God gave us an imagination anyway?

ALL: So we can look with the eyes of faith beyond surface impressions

One: to see what is really going on in our world

ALL: in order to recreate new worlds of flourishing for all!

*OPENING PRAYER:

Liberating God, the imagination for what you want out of your people has been found and sprinkled throughout our Holy Scriptures and experienced in our own lives. The hard message of a clear lesson in this book is that God has searching eyes on corruption and those who openly participate. Let us rest in that. Give us wisdom to allow the creative symbolism and storytelling of our scripture to guide us in what needs to be done to discern the presence of this harm and then to remember joy and to embody love, peace and gratitude on this day and all the hard days ahead. Amen.

*OPENING HYMN #399

"He Touched Me"

MENTAL HEALTH MOMENT

PRAYER OF TRANSFORMATION AND NEW LIFE

God of the Other, we say to you that we cannot remember the last time we listened, truly listened to the Other and sought understanding, let alone see the childlike glory in another's spirit. We come forward to say that starting today, we change by becoming more present in our interactions with all of your creation and we hold no judgement and cast no shame on someone trying to exist in this cold complicated and beautiful world. (time of silence)

WORDS OF GRACE

We are indeed a Beloved Community capable of working towards collective flourishing for it is bright as crystal flowing from the throne of God.

We are the light and let us shine brightly as we accompany others to abundance and collective freedom.

*CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE #571

"Halle, Halle, Hallelujah"

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Halle, halle, hallelujah!

Halle, halle, hallelujah! Hallelujah, hallelujah!

SCRIPTURE LESSONS

Romans 7:18-25 - NIV

¹⁸ For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. ¹⁹ For I do not do the

good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. ²⁰ Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

²¹ So I find this law at work: Although I want to do good, evil is right there with me. ²² For in my inner being I delight in God's law; ²³ but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. ²⁴ What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death? ²⁵ Thanks be to God, who delivers me through Jesus Christ our Lord!

So then, I myself in my mind am a slave to God's law, but in my sinful nature a slave to the law of sin.

Psalm 51:1-12 – p. 632 of hymnal – Leader reads odd verses, people even.

John 5:1-9 – NIV - The Healing at the Pool

Some time later, Jesus went up to Jerusalem for one of the Jewish festivals. ² Now there is in Jerusalem near the Sheep Gate a pool, which in Aramaic is called Bethesda^[a] and which is surrounded by five covered colonnades. ³ Here a great number of disabled people used to lie—the blind, the lame, the

paralyzed. ^[4] ^[b] ⁵ One who was there had been an invalid for thirty-eight

years. ⁶ When Jesus saw him lying there and learned that he had been in this condition for a long time, he asked him, "Do you want to get well?"

⁷ "Sir," the invalid replied, "I have no one to help me into the pool when the water is stirred. While I am trying to get in, someone else goes down ahead of me."

⁸ Then Jesus said to him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." ⁹ At once the man was cured; he picked up his mat and walked.

The day on which this took place was a Sabbath,

SERMON

"It's okay, to not be okay – But it'll be all right"

*HYMN #77

"How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds"

PRAYER CONCERNS

CALL TO PRAYER

#403 "Lord, Listen to your Children Praying"

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE...THE LORD'S PRAYER

Petitions end with "God of Mercy, **Hear our cry**"

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.

POST PRAYER RESPONSE

#403 "Lord, Listen to your Children Praying"

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY (Jingle Change for May supports The Guest House of Milwaukee)

***OFFERTORY RESPONSE Tune "Doxology"**

**Let trumpets sound and voices sing!
Let all on earth their praises bring!
For Christ has conquered sin and death
And given life eternal breath. Amen**

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Still speaking God, we are witness to who Jesus is – from antiquity to modernity. Faithfully, we experience a grace that renews and enlivens us. Bless our offerings so others can be witness to the ways we live into your word so that our communities may be refreshed and restored. 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:

- Each Sunday of May, there has been a “mental health moment” as we focus on normalizing and de-stigmatizing mental health issues. The first week, we encouraged you to write a note card to someone. The second we focused on positive affirmations. Last week the theme was “You are enough” and we distributed tactile strips. If you missed any week or just wanted another notecard, affirmation card or tactile strip, there are some in the lounge for you to take. Be kind to yourself! – The WISE team
- Each year we like to recognize our graduates. Do you know a member of Bethlehem who is graduating from high school, college, graduate school, military academy, etc.? If so, please provide pastor Randy (in writing) with the student’s name, school they are graduating from, and “next plans” if they wish to share. You can send him the info by email or leave a note in the office. We will honor the graduates on June 15 during worship for any that would like to attend.
- The Bethlehem Merry Christians have signed up for the "PIG ROUND UP PROGRAM". This will take place in the month of May. This program is through Tietz's Piggly Wiggly in Kiel. The cashier will ask you upon check out if you would like to round up your total to the next dollar amount. At the end of the month the Merry Christians will receive a check on the amount that was rounded up for the month of May.
- Benefit for Ross Sippel: Saturday, June 7th from 3:00 to ? At Fat Boys Bar & Grill in St. Cloud.
- Feel free to look at the collection of pictures recording the construction of the "New" Bethlehem church, 20 years ago.
- Undy 500... Pastor Randy will be delivering the donations to the Guest House on Saturday, May 31. If you still wish to donate items, he will need them by Friday. Thanks to all who have donated.

Help Us with Church Tech! - Volunteers Needed – All Ages Welcome!

Bethlehem UCC is looking for volunteers—including youth—to help with our growing **technology ministry**. Whether you're tech-savvy or just willing to learn, we would love your help!

Areas Where We Need Support:

- **Sound Room** – Operate audio equipment during worship and events.
- **Live Streaming** – Run our laptop and camera to stream services online.

Youth volunteers can count this as **community service** or simply as a gift of your time and talents to your church.

No experience necessary—training will be provided!

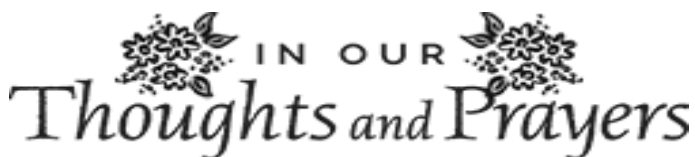
Interested or have questions?

Please speak to Rev. Randy or any of the members of the Consistory

COMMUNITY ANNOUNCEMENTS: Check for flyers in fellowship hall

- ❑ Memorial Day, May 26, 11a-1p – Dinner @ American Legion Clubhouse in New Holstein. See flyer for details
- ❑ **OUR LADY OF THE HOLYLAND PARISH SOCIAL – AT JOHNSBURG!**

Saturday, June 7th, 2025. Outdoor Polka Mass @ 4PM. 5PM-9PM 2/5's Party Band. Brats, hamburgers, and refreshments available in the beer stand following mass. Raffle drawing held at 9:00PM. Putting Contest, Bean Bag Tournament, and Pot of Gold Raffle during event. Hope to see you there! St. John the Baptist Church [N9288 County Road W, Malone].



Joys!

The birth of Hudson Tommy Erdmann on May 14, 2025. Parents: Armond Wempner and Mckayla Erdmann. Very proud grandparents: Dan & Amy Wempner

Those Grieving:

Family of Jill Wehmeyer-Sheets

Those struggling with health issues:

| | |
|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Linda Smith | Ross Sippel |
| Jill Sheets | Mary Beth Molitor |
| Will Mathes | Heidi Konen |
| Darlene Horneck | Emily (Melissa's cousin) |
| Brad Westphalen | Dawson Horneck |
| Jessica Horneck | Tom Lefeber |
| Marie Rietbrock | Donna Firman |
| Dana | Hubert |

Those unable to worship with us:

Merlin Nimmer Helen Henning

Stay Informed! Sign up to receive Bethlehem's weekly email update, The Bethlehem Blurb. Send your email address to BethUCCKiel@outlook.com and you will be added!

2025 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

Financial Secretary - Ruthie Rumpff (920)946-5849 srumpff@tm.net

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

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

This Week at Bethlehem:

Today, Sunday 5/25: 9:30am Sunday Worship

Monday 5/26: Memorial Day: Remember the Fallen

Tuesday 5/27: *Happy Birthday Amber Hoeffner!!*

Wednesday 5/28: *Happy Birthday Noah Watson!! Happy Anniversary Ben & Cassie Jeanty!*

Thursday 5/29: *Happy Birthday Armond Wempner!!*

Friday 5/30:

Saturday 5/31: *Happy Birthday Lloyd Rumpff!*

Sunday 6/1: 9:30am Sunday Worship w/ Communion

May Pantry Items: **Laundry Soap or Fabric Softener**

I am Not Okay

I am not okay
I'm barely getting by
I'm losing track of days
And losing sleep at night
I am not okay
I'm hanging on the rails
So if I say I'm fine
Just know I learned to hide it well
I know, I can't be the only one
Who's holding on for dear life
But God knows, I know
When it's all said and done
I'm not okay
But it's all gonna be alright
It's not okay
But we're all gonna be alright

I woke up today
I almost stayed in bed
Had the devil on my back
And voices in my head
Some days, it ain't all bad
Some days, it all gets worse
Some days, I swear I'm better off
Layin' in that dirt
I know, I can't be the only one
Who's holding on for dear life
But God knows, I know
When it's all said and done
I'm not okay
But it's all gonna be alright
It's not okay
But we're all gonna be alright
Gonna be alright
Gonna be alright
I know one day
We'll see the other side
The pain'll wash away
In a holy water tide
And we all gonna be alright
I know, I can't be the only one
Who's holding on for dear life
But God knows, I know
When it's all said and done
I'm not okay
But it's all gonna be alright
It's not okay
But we're all gonna be alright
I'm not okay
But it's all gonna be alright

Source: Musixmatch

*Songwriters: Ashley Glenn Gorley / Casey Brown / Taylor Delmar Phillips / Jason Bradley De Ford
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Of My Domain Music, Poppy's Picks, Tape Room Tunes, Track & Feels*