



A Beacon of Hope

The Monthly Newsletter of Bethel United Church of Christ

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December 2023

from the temporary Pastor's cluttered desk:

We have now shared a couple of months together in this unusual --- and yet familiar --- venture together. But we're not finished yet. The calendar ahead is daunting. But it is filled with good stuff, exciting things and, if we'll do it, a deeper understanding of --- not only what we believe --- but also how that belief lifts us to new solutions for life.

In the year 1223 the beloved St. Francis of Assisi created the first nativity scene so that all people would honor this holy child, born in such humble and desperate poverty. St. Bonaventure (1221-1274) recalls the following:

"It happened in the third year before his death, that in order to excite the inhabitants of Greccio to commemorate the nativity of the Infant Jesus with great devotion, [St. Francis] determined to keep it with all possible solemnity; and lest he should be accused of lightness or novelty, he asked and obtained the permission of the sovereign Pontiff. Then he prepared a manger, and brought hay, and an ox and an ass to the place appointed.

The brethren were summoned, the people ran together, the forest resounded with their voices, and that venerable night was made glorious by many brilliant lights and sonorous psalms of praise. Quote; And so, began one of our most beloved Christian traditions. Over the years we've allowed this holiday to get totally bent out of shape, from wild parties to unbelievable gift giving. But it means so much more in our faith. Four Sundays before Christmas we meditate on four themes from the life of our Lord, Jesus Christ. First, Hope; next, Preparation; third, Joy or Peace, and finally, Love or Adoration. We light a new candle each Sunday, and then finally a white one signifying the birth of the Holy One, the Perfect One. And on Christmas Eve, we light them all. You see, embodied in the remembrance of this one Baby Jesus, St. Francis knew there existed a depth of meaning that even surpassed the Biblical record of Matthew and Luke. If we

observe Advent seriously, we'll see that we need hope. We will begin to prepare for a solemn nativity. Then we will be led, by our marvelous choir, in a time of eagerly awaited joy and peace. And finally, we may find, right in front of us, the ultimate love, and feel our adoration of this child, gifts or not.

I hope all of you will join us as we solemnly open each new door on the way to Christmas. Look carefully at our plans and confirm your participation. We pretty much have discovered that our December is full --- of good things, hopeful things, uplifting experiences: experiences which bring us closer to the Christ, both child and adult. On this glorious season let us build the life of Bethel Church. As we slip into the New Year, let us be ready for new experiences together, as one Body of Christ, to do His will.

In great anticipation,

Glenn



COUNCIL CORNER FOR NOVEMBER 2023

Apostle – **Luanne** reported on discussions with CAMPP parents and some ideas they had for next year.

Sam R. showed the visitors Welcome Bags which are now ready to be passed out as needed.

Deacon – The financial report for October was unanimously approved.

Plans are being made for early next year to the church's by-laws, mission statement and core values.

Jim was pleased with the comments and discussion held at the fall congregational meeting. This needs to continue.

Elder - Allen Deckerd: Allen D. continues to do visitation each month, which is going well.

Lee reported that in October the Food Pantry served 89 families with 200 people. 75 of those 200 being of the age of 65-85. The need continues.

Church business: A leasing co. from TX is interested in leasing some of the church land for oil and gas drilling. Brian will follow up on this.

We will begin drilling a new well for the church/parsonage in early 2024.

Poinsettias will be \$15 each this season with \$5 of those proceeds going to the “Veterans of the Cross” fund.

*** Nayiri Karjian, minister for the Association spoke to the council regarding our church and the upcoming search for a new minister. She will be working with us and there are many options to look at as we move forward. Many thanks to Nayiri for her time and experience in this matter.

Respectfully submitted by Lee Kornick

Christmas Caroling

Sunday, December 3rd

@ 1:30

Come join the fun and share the joy of the season with friends and church family we don't get to see very often!



Poinsettia Order Form
Single 6 1/2 - inch pots \$15.00

Red

Pink

White

Flowers by AJP Floral

Orders need to be in and paid for by Nov. 20th,2023

Name _____

Phone _____

Dedication

Please write it the way you want it to appear

Birthdays



William Meier	12/2
Cheryl Ramsey	12/8
Marie Miller	12/12
Ken Harris	12/15
Cynthia Bullock	12/17
Brian McKarns	12/20
Shannon Kahler	12/21
Claire Brunner	12/22

Shirley Rice	12/23
June Wallace	12/25
Amy Humphrey	12/25
Chris Kaake	12/28
Lee Kornick	12/28
Wanda Humphrey	12/29
Glenn Swope	12/29
Dorothy Ramsayer	12/31



Carole & Glenn Swope
12/28/1955 68 years

Christmas Eve



Service



Candles



Carols

*and the Story of that
Holy Night*

Bethel United Church of Christ

December 24th at 7:00 p.m.

Join us for this short, but very meaningful service.

Sunday morning Worship also - beginning at 10:00 a.m.

CAMPP News



Thanksgiving *CAMPP* was celebrated on November 5th in a “slightly non-traditional way”. What is one of the things kids (and adults) love most??? A pizza party!!! YAY!!!! And boy, did we enjoy PIZZA!!!!

We had an art project and a **TURKEY NAMING CONTEST!!!** Each *CAMPP* kid and adult colored their turkey while thinking of the perfect **NAME** for their turkey and goodness, did they come up with some great ones!!

Sam Rice and Linda Buttermore were our judges for the evening, and they had the tough job of picking the **BEST** from some **SUPER** names. Here are the winners:

Kids:

- **Funniest Name –** *Tater Tot the Terrific Turkey* Wesley Daley
- **Cutest Name -** *Sir Gobbles a Lot* Adalyn Ludwig
- **Most Unusual Name –** *Bob the Builder* Maddison Hergenroder

Adults:

- **Funniest Name –** Sir Gravy Kylie Dillon
- **Cutest Name –** Gus Dawn Coffield
- **Most Unusual Name** Telly the Turkey Izzy Ludwig

Also, two winners from our Double 4 Square Turkey Scramble game were Olivia Humphrey and Wesley Daley. **CONGRATS TO ALL OF OUR WINNERS!!!**



Our last **CAMPP** of the year will be **December 3rd** starting with **lunch at 11:30** right after

church!! Please note the different starting time due to some scheduling conflicts.
See you at our Christmas CAMPP!!! **All kids MUST have reservations!!!**



Ladies!

Please join us at WINGS on the first Thursday
of each month at 10:00 a.m.

Bethel Fellowship Hall

Light refreshments, time of devotion,
discussion, various activities, fun fellowship!

Next meeting: December 7th.



Veterans Day Recognition

Thank You!!

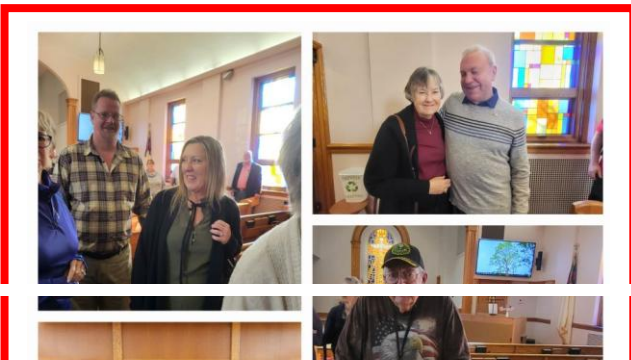
What a very special day we observed as we honored several local Veterans on November 12th during a worship service, led by Pastor Glenn Swope, which was dedicated especially for them. A day to give thanks for the sacrifice these men and women gave for our country to ensure our continued freedom.

The service began with the impressive presentation of the American Flag by three of the McBride brothers who were on hand for the celebration. The Bethel UCC choir, 20 members strong, delivered a very powerful tribute to all five branches of the United States Armed Forces. Phil Harlan led the introductions of twenty Veterans which included their rank, branch of service, years they served and where they were stationed. Each guest was honored with applause, a special 'Thank You' card and a small gift of appreciation.

Those honored were Jim Ramsey, Marvin Dye, Walt Smith, Jerry Vogelhuber, Laura Scott, Elvin Barnett, Harlan Kestner, John Handschin, Jim Yeagley, Melissa Yeagley, Ron Sanor, Rick Adams, Denny Lane, Tom Sanor, Jim McBride, Tom McBride, Frank McBride, Bill McBride, Richard McBride (posthumously), and Bob Brogan.

Beautiful patriotic music was also provided by pianist/organist Peggy Christy throughout the service. The morning of honor and celebration was followed by a reception and fellowship. Thank you to all who helped in any way to make this day a wonderful success. And a very special **Thank You** to our Veterans for allowing us the privilege of honoring them in this way.

***Thank you to Debbie Scott for taking the awesome pictures on the next few pages.*



What's happening at Bethel?

Devotional Bible Study will resume on Tuesdays January 23rd, 2024 10:30A.M.

Teen's Journey into the Bible will meet each Sunday during Church.

No Bell Choir Practice till late January

The Adult Choir Practices Wednesdays at 6:00P.M. until Dec. 13th

Caroling Dec. 3rd 1:30

Next CAMPP will be Dec. 3rd @ 5:30 P.M.

Wings Thursday December 7th @ 10am.

Next Council Meeting will be Dec 12th at 1:00 P.M.

The Pantry will be serving food to our local community Dec. 13th, 2023.

Christmas Eve Service December 24th @ 7:00 P.M.

No Pantry Dec. 27TH

The Church office will be closed December 22ND & 25th, also January 1st.

Bethel United Church of Christ

25701 Buck Road

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