

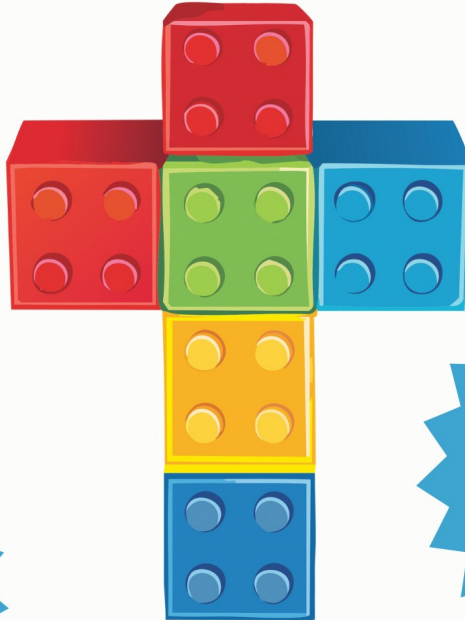
The Bethlehem STAR

Pride in Our Past – Faith in Our Future

June 2025

Building Faith

JUNE
22-24



WITH
SOMETHING
FOR GRADES
7-12!

RISING
1-6
GRADES

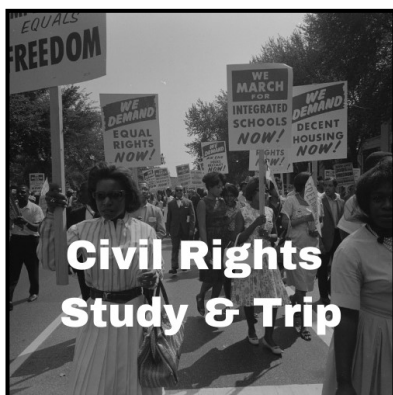
Bethlehem UCC
VBS

Pastor's Perspective



It's hard to believe this time last year we were in the midst of the Sabbatical Summer here at Bethlehem. (The year has gone by so quickly!) Part of the purpose of my time away was to come back and share some of what I learned/experienced with the congregation.

To that end: The Sabbatical included a ten-day Civil Rights tour through the southern US. I learned so much about our history and about the role of the church (for good and for ill) in the Civil Rights Movement. I'm excited to share some of what I learned with others!



You are invited to be part of a Civil Rights Study and Trip that will begin at the start of the coming school year. We will read *The Color of Compromise* by Jemar Tisby and *How the Word is Passed* by Clint Smith.

The study portion will begin in the fall of 2025. In spring of 2026, we'll travel to Birmingham and Montgomery (and maybe a plantation in Louisiana--we'll let the group decide!).

So far, we have 19 people signed up (thirteen from Bethlehem and six from the ETSA). Once we have identified all who wish to participate, we'll make plans as a group about how often and in what format (in person, Zoom,

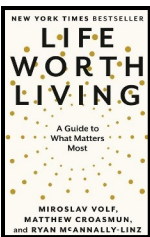
etc.) we'd like to meet as we work through these readings together.

I am exploring ways to keep our costs down. If you are interested in participating, but concerned about cost, please reach out to me.

You can indicate your interest by emailing me (emily@bethlehemucc.org) or by filling out this Google Form [HERE](#).

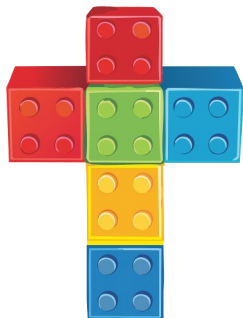


I am excited to officially join the Board of Directors at United Caring Services. Did you know that UCS was founded by Bethel United Church of Christ? As part of its by-laws, it is required that at least two board members be from the UCC. As Brian Newton steps off, I will join Lee Ann Shafer as a UCC representative on the board. I look forward to supporting the work of UCS and continuing to strengthen Bethlehem's existing ties.



Have you signed up to be part of the summer *Life Worth Living* study? We meet for the first time on June 12 at 6:00 p.m. in the Conference Room. Come prepared to discuss the introduction and first two chapters of the book.

Building Faith



Bethlehem UCC
VBS

DATE: June 22-24

TIME: 5:15-7:30 pm (dinner included)
Tuesday, June 24 - VBS Wrap-Up Foam Party
7:30 - 8:30 pm

WHO: Rising 1-6 grades (7-12 grades are invited to volunteer and/or participate in Handbell Workshop.)

Friends welcomed!

WHAT: Join us for a brick themed Vacation Bible School focused on “Building Faith”! Expect good food, Bible stories, games, crafts, fellowship and a few surprises!

REGISTER: Text Margaret Eberhart
OR
via Google Form — click [HERE](#)

VBS SERVICE PROJECT:

We will collect items and money for **Bosse’s Constructed Creations**, a class at Bosse High School where students learn entrepreneurial skills through repurposing construction projects. Donated items can be placed in the Children’s entry in the basement.

Items to Collect



Any kind of paint brush
Any kind of wood or crafting supply from Dollar Tree or similar retail store
Ziploc bags (gallon sized)
Folders
Sharpies

Continued



Pencils
Sandpaper
Individually wrapped snacks
Small pieces of **all wood** furniture or décor
(laminated, pressed wood, or vinyl
do not work with the paint/processes used)

Not a shopper? Gift cards or monetary donations
can be turned in to Margaret or the church office.

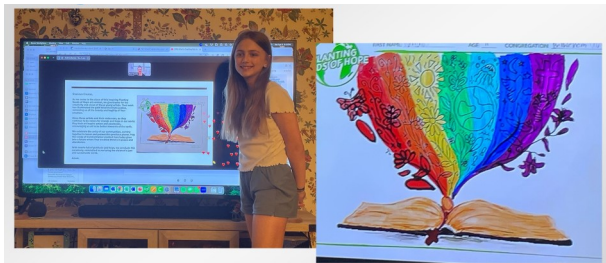
A note from Bosse Teacher Leigh Gray



Hi, my name is Leigh Gray, and I am the construction teacher at Bosse High School. At 52 years of age, I decided to change things up a bit and started a new career as a teacher. I thank God every day for the opportunity and challenge. The class teaches entrepreneurial skills through repurposing all kinds of prebuilt wood items, turning them into up-to-date creations, and then selling them! Many of our items are pieces of furniture or wood decor. The kids take home 70–80% of the final sales of the product. My classes had a record-breaking attendance rate this year! Next year they have increased my classes from 2 to 5 with 26 students in each class. It has been an honor to uplift and work with what many find difficult teens. God has given me a passion to love on them and fill their lives in all kinds of ways, even monetarily! This past school year the kids sold over \$10,000 in projects! The Lord has provided for us every step of the way and, in turn, has provided for these impoverished kiddos! The kids told me they bought groceries and clothes, ate at Chick-Fil-A for the first time, or even helped pay the bills at home.

We would be so grateful to have you support our class in any way! Go find out more at Bosse's Constructed Creations on Facebook!

Congratulations Natalie Slade!



Our own Natalie Slade was awarded the Grand Prize in the UCC's Climate Hope Art Contest out of 540 other submissions by young people across the country.

Natalie, along with a parent or guardian, has won an all-expenses-paid trip this September to visit Washington, DC. They will have the opportunity to advocate with the offices of their Congress members, tour the Capitol, and learn how they can bring their faith values to life in the halls of power. The winning art will additionally serve as the logo for UCC Climate Hope advocacy work throughout 2025.



In May, Rich Steedman captured a beautiful double rainbow over Bethlehem!



Let's Celebrate Our Graduates

Audrey Kuhlenschmidt



Audrey is the daughter of proud parents Cory and Brandi Kuhlenschmidt. She graduated from Evansville Christian High School and will attend Purdue University in the fall studying aviation management. While figure skating has been Audrey's first and foremost passion since she was six, she embraced new opportunities during high school as a founding member of the high school's dance team, serving as team captain in her senior year. Most recently, Audrey has been pursuing her private pilot's license. She is excited about her next chapter at Purdue and we all are grateful for her spiritual growth and support from the Bethlehem family.

Nathan Longwell



Nathan graduated from North High School. While at North, Nathan took pride in being a member of the North Concert Choir, the EVSC Honors Choir, and participated in several North drama musicals and plays. Nathan plans to attend Purdue University in the fall as a history major.



Let's Celebrate Our Graduates

Emily Ozete



Emily graduated Summa Cum Laude from North High School. She was Captain of the Girls' Tennis team, a core member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, a member of the National Honor Society, the winner of the Kiwanis Award for North Girls' Tennis team, and on Student Council.

She will be attending Purdue University and studying Integrated Business Engineering at the Daniels School of Business. She is grateful for her Bethlehem church family that has supported her from her baptism through confirmation and beyond, and was happy to serve as a Confirmation mentor this year.

Emily Shreffler



Emily graduated from North High School. She was Senior Class President, played varsity lacrosse all four years, and was involved with Fellowship of Christian Athletes. Emily will be attending Purdue University and plans to study kinesiology. She was awarded the Emerging Leader Scholarship and will begin that program this summer. Thank you to all of our church family for your love and continued support in her faith journey.



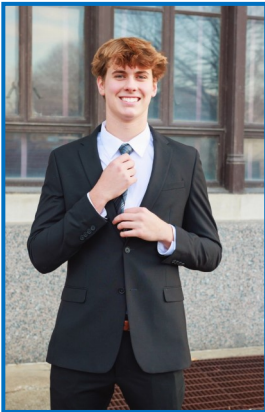
Let's Celebrate Our Graduates

Marshall Traylor



Marshall graduated from Reitz Memorial High School and enjoyed running track and playing soccer. He will be attending University of South Carolina in the fall studying Civil Engineering.

Owen Zausch



Owen Zausch graduated with high honors from Reitz Memorial High School. He thoroughly enjoyed his time as a Tiger in and out of the classroom. He had a large role on both the Boys' Tennis team and Boys' Lacrosse team for four years. Owen also tutored other students through the Incognito Program. Owen plans to study Business Management at the University of Georgia in the fall.

Changes to Recycling Program

Our single-stream recycling provider has started to levy a \$26 recycling contamination fine for every non-recyclable item in the dumpster at pickup. We've been charged multiple fines per month with fees well over \$200 for one pickup.

The Green Team is asking everyone to chip in and work together to prevent these fines. The office will also put up signs as a reminder of what should and shouldn't go into the recycling dumpster. Please dump out recyclable items from trash bags and dispose of the bags.



YES

Clean Paper
Cardboard
Aluminum Cans



NO

Shredded Paper
Trash Bags
Plastic of Any Kind

Accumulative Solar Savings

\$64,261.05

Vacation Bible School Work Day

Monday, June 2

10:00 - 12:00 pm

We are gearing up for VBS and would love some help prepping decorations on June 2 from 10:00 - 12:00 pm. Please contact Margaret Eberhart with any questions at 859-576-1442.

WEB Collection



The WEB group (Women Energizing Bethlehem) wants to help you recycle an item lots of us have at home. We are collecting large plastic pill bottles. They must be a container approximately 4" x 1 3/4" with lid, usually for 90 day supply of meds.

These will be filled with some items to make first aid kits for the homeless. The kits would be distributed at United Caring Shelter and in coordination with Aldersgate UMC Homeless Ministry. There will be a marked box in the Welcome Area for your containers. Please try to remove the label. Information will follow on the date we put the kits together, as we will need some extra hands.

BBQ Dinner Ice Cream Social Silent Auction Cruise In



**JULY 13
4:00 - 700 PM**

Mark your calendar now (July 13) for the annual Bethlehem Barbecue Dinner, Ice Cream Social, and new this year, Cruise In. This church-wide event raises thousands of dollars each year for the benefit of Evansville Habitat for Humanity.



The scrumptious adult meal includes a barbecue pork butt sandwich, baked beans, coleslaw, macaroni salad, chips, drink, and dessert. Kid's meal includes hot dog, chips, applesauce, drink, and dessert. Dessert includes homemade cookies, cakes, pies, and, of course, delicious homemade ice cream. The price of a dinner this year will be \$12 (\$6 for kids) and includes a bottomless bowl of ice cream.

Top Auction Items:

3 night/ 2 day stay at Green Turtle Bay on Lake Barkley (sleeps 6)
Foursome at Oak Meadow Golf Course
Foursome at Rolling Hills Golf Course
Kentucky Kingdom Tickets
Holiday World Tickets
KitchenAid Lift Stand Mixer
Men's Mountain Bike
Green Egg Tabletop Grill
...and many more great items!

To register a car for the Cruise In, please scan the QR code.



BBQ Dinner & Ice Cream Social Committee Needs Your Help!



Many volunteers are needed to cook and serve the food, and to contribute homemade ice cream and baked desserts. To volunteer to help in the kitchen and dining room, please contact Barry Jones: twinpapa02@yahoo.com or Jane Koch: jorpha49@gmail.com.

If you can bring homemade ice cream or baked goods, please contact Linda Gilbert: lwsgilbert@gmail.com or Dee Russell: drussell801@sbcglobal.net. You can also use the form below and drop it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. Thanks so much!

I would like to donate the following items for the Ice Cream Social:

_____ Homemade Ice Cream	_____ Cake or cupcakes
Flavors other than	_____ Pie
vanilla are popular	_____ Cookies

_____ I can help in the kitchen or dining room. _____ 3:30-5:30
 _____ 5:30-7:30

Containers to bring your ice cream to church will be available outside the kitchen in the coming weeks.



BACK BAY MISSION TRIP for ETSA

November 1 - 8, 2025

- **Comfortable accommodations in the Mission House in Biloxi, Mississippi**
 - **Construction and non-construction jobs**
 - **Cost of \$250 for shelter and materials and \$60 for food**
- We hope you will prayerfully consider going on this trip.**



**To join this mission
trip, contact:**

**Lee Ann Shafer 812-746-2984
or lashafer75@gmail.com or**

IT'S NOT ALL NAILS AND PAINT!

Work campers going on our mission trip to Biloxi should keep in mind that this is a mission experience that goes beyond hammers and paint brushes!

Here are some ideas to provide a change of pace or to keep non-construction participants busy:

MICAH DAY CENTER.

On Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays, volunteers assist staff with serving the needs of our homeless guests who come during the morning for showers, laundry, use of the telephone and computer, and to sign up for other services offered.

Volunteers help run the laundry equipment, clean the showers between each use, and monitor the supply room. In between tasks, you get a chance to chat with our guests, too!

FOOD PANTRY



This small room in our Administration Building is where we stock food items which can be given to persons who stop in during the week for emergency assistance. Two volunteers can help us restock shelves, keep them in order, sort for expiration dates, and generally help with related tasks on Monday, Wednesday and Friday (9-11:30).

LOAVES & FISHES

Back Bay Mission has a long history with the Loaves & Fishes Soup Kitchen. Volunteers are needed Monday thru Friday to assist with meal preparation, serving, and clean up. Volunteers must wear long pants and if the group includes anyone under the age of 18, must be accompanied by an adult.



AND, OF COURSE, all the skills and energy you can recruit for housing recovery jobs: painting, dry wall, carpentry, roofing, cabinetry work, flooring – and other tasks on your skill sheet.





Everyone is invited to celebrate our nation's independence at the annual Red, White, and Blueberry Brunch on **Sunday, June 29, at 9:00 am!** Please join us in the Welcoming Area for a time of food, fellowship, and song. Mrs. Margaret has a fun intergenerational activity planned, too!

There will be breakfast casseroles, muffins, kuchen, and fruit to eat, along with juice, coffee, and milk to drink. If you have a patriotic food specialty that you would like to contribute, please bring it that morning. Please contact Debbie Havens (812) 480-7060 or dkhavens49@gmail.com with questions. Sponsored and prepared by the WEB group, this brunch is free to everyone.



We rejoice with church family members who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this month. A full list of birthdays and anniversaries can be found on our website at bethlehem/estar or by contacting the church office (867-2497) for a printed list.

It's easy to be an altar flower donor to celebrate an anniversary or birthday or remember a loved one. Prices are \$40 for two vases and \$35 for one centerpiece.

View all available dates and online sign-up instructions at bethlehemucc.org. To streamline the process, please sign up online if at all possible or contact Cindy Carwile at ckcarwile@gmail.com. If you prefer a paper form, they are available in the vestibule (office entrance open 24/7), church office hallway, Welcoming Area, children and youth entrance, and narthex.

Available dates in the coming months:

July 13, 20, 27
August 3, 17, 24, 31
September 7, 21, 28



Financial Recap

April General Account

	<u>2025</u>	<u>2024</u>
Monthly Beginning Balance	\$ 178,049.38	\$ 207,024.66
Monthly Pledge Deposits	25,565.08	34,654.78
Monthly Other Deposits	2,045.88	825.30
Monthly Operating Disbursements	(64,374.45)	(43,516.37)
Monthly Other Disbursements	(690.41)	(189.19)
Monthly Ending Balance	<u>\$ 140,595.48</u>	<u>\$ 198,799.18</u>

YTD General Account

Beginning Balance	\$ 170,535.44	\$ 182,223.60
Pledge Deposits	150,857.39	141,450.05
Other Deposits	6,409.55	6,144.83
Operating Disbursements	(187,804.92)	(162,605.76)
Other Disbursements	598.02	31,586.46
Ending Balance	<u>\$ 140,595.48</u>	<u>\$ 198,799.18</u>



Bible Presentation to Hazel Hungate



CHURCH COUNCIL

Council Highlights

- After careful consideration and discussion, the Council has decided not to move forward with replacing the flooring in the fellowship hall at this time. This decision was made based on current priorities, budget considerations, and the overall condition of the flooring. We appreciate the input and understanding and will continue to evaluate facility needs as part of our ongoing stewardship.
- The Green Team has recommended implementing a new recycling process to help address the monthly charges for mixing trash/recycling items together. Additional information will be shared with members over the next few weeks.
- The Council encourages everyone to attend Sunday Council Chats on the last Sunday of each month. The next Council Chat is scheduled for June 29th in the Welcome Area.



Thank you for your recent donation to Weekday! This school year, we had over 800 students enrolled in Week-day at their EVSC school. What an incredible increase in attendance from the last few years.

With your help, each student has the opportunity to hear of God's word. They also receive their very own Bible!

Our hope is for each child to know Jesus loves them, and they were made in the loving image of God. Thank you for supporting this ministry.

Many blessings,
The Weekday Office

Dear Church Family,

Thank you so much for supporting me through Confirmation and for the bracelet. I love it and wear it every day!

Thanks!

Lots of love,
Natalie (Slade)



Dear Friends at Bethlehem UCC,

On behalf of everyone at Eden Theological Seminary, I would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude for your support of the seminary. Your financial contribution to the Annual Fund on 5/5/2025 (\$3,299) is incredibly meaningful. It allows us to continue a 175-year tradition of educating and engaging the next generation of spiritual leaders - people who are developing theological imagination and faithful resilience to join God's loving and liberating work in the world.

Thanks to your generosity, we are building communities of learning not only across denominational lines, but across entire faiths. Our developing Network Model is set to help seminarians across the country adapt together to the ever-changing future.

We are grateful to have you as part of our community of supporters, and we are excited to keep you updated on how your donation is being used to further our mission.

Once again, thank you for your kindness and support. Should you have any questions or wish to learn more about our programs, please do not hesitate to reach out.

In gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Mary Shaller Blaufuss
Vice President for Advancement

Just a note of thanks to everyone for all the prayers and concern during and following my recent hospital stay. It was quite unexpected, but I am thankful it took care of some issues I was unaware of. Thanks again. Your support and concern are deeply appreciated.



Pastor Doug

Dear Bethlehem UCC,

Thank you for your generous gift (\$8353.50) to Back Bay Mission! Your gift to Friends of the Mission makes it possible to meet the most urgent needs of the poor and marginalized of the Mississippi Gulf Coast.

Your gift is already at work strengthening neighborhoods, seeking justice, and transforming lives. You're helping a homeowner stay in their home, providing homeless families with apartments, making sure people have enough food, and giving people the support they need to make their lives better.

Most importantly, your gift is making sure that Back Bay Mission is here to provide a safe and welcoming place for everyone who comes through our doors. Thank you for partnering with us through your generous gift. We, and those we serve, are ever grateful.

Grace and peace,

James Pennington
Executive Director



BETHLEHEM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
6400 Oak Hill Road
Evansville, IN 47725

Please contact the church office if you are aware of any address changes.

(812) 867-2497 (Office)

email: church@bethlehemucc.org

website: bethlehemucc.org

Follow us on Facebook,
Instagram, and Twitter

Office Hours

Monday 12:00 - 3:00 PM

**Tuesday - Thursday
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

***Striving to welcome all who seek God; to grow in faith;
and to love neighbor as self through action.***