

The Bethlehem STAR

Pride in Our Past - Faith in Our Future

October 2024



Pastor's Perspective



Can I get a do-over?

Theoretically, one is supposed to come back from a Sabbatical refreshed, energized, and ready to go! Unfortunately, things didn't exactly work out that way in our case. Staff that I so desperately wanted to relieve of the extra weight they carried this summer have been picking up slack again over the last few weeks during my illness and recovery. I may sound like a broken record, but thank you, thank you, thank you to Pastor Doug, the rest of the staff, and lay leaders who have continued doing the next thing that needs to be done to keep things running at Bethlehem!

As I take a second run at "reentry," I look forward to a mission-packed month at Bethlehem. October includes our Neighbors in Need offering, the Bucket Blitz, and the Pumpkin Patch (which funds our Bucket Blitz each year). I'm especially excited about the Outreach Team's new strategy for staffing the patch on the weekends, which will draw in so many of you to participate in this Bethlehem tradition! All the while, both the Outreach Team and the Church Council are in the process of making decisions about sharing from the Voigt Trust with agencies doing important ministries locally and beyond. Oh, and did you know that our Endowment is paying to redo the kitchen floor at United Caring Services? And all of this is on the heels of a successful Fish Fry benefiting important ministries like the Tri-State Food Bank and the Gather Network!

This is quite a list! And I'm willing to bet there are other mission efforts happening at Bethlehem that I don't even know about. Doesn't it make you feel good to be part of a church so engaged in passing along what we have to those who need it most?

Cont.

Our generosity comes not from an effort to earn God's favor, but rather from our understanding that God has already given us so much. Our generosity flows from our gratitude to the God who first gave us life, and then also gave us new life in Christ. Our generosity is our "thank you note" to a God who will always outgive us.

Our very lives depend on God's provision. During the nights I was in the hospital, I spent a lot of time thinking and praying. And I thought about the manna that fed the Hebrews in the wilderness (Exodus 16). God gave them enough, and just enough, for each day (plus double the day before the Sabbath!). And I thought about the Syrophenician woman, who despite Jesus' harsh words toward her, was content to simply have a crumb from the table (Mark 7.24-30). And I prayed just for a crumb to get through the night, just for my portion of manna to get through the day.

We can get so distracted by wanting more and more, but when the superficial is stripped away, we see more clearly that manna for today or a crumb from the table is enough. Because both come from the God who knit you together in your mother's womb, who sent Jesus to make things right in a broken world, who knows the number of hairs on your head.

So, let us celebrate during this month of mission opportunities, that God continues to supply our every need with *enough* for today and for tomorrow. We will never match the generosity of God, but it sure is exciting to try! Thanks be to God that we are in the position to do so.

~ Pastor Emily





October Sunday School Overview

What we're teaching!

Pre-K - 6th Grade

ALONG THE WAY: A 4-Week Series from the Old Testament on Job



SERIES OVERVIEW:

People often say, "It's about the journey, not the destination," when their travel plans don't work out how they expected. This phrase couldn't have been more true for Job, who went through a shocking journey. In this 4-week series, kids will hear from Job's story as he learned to navigate loss and trust God's itinerary every step of the way. Through the story of Job's perseverance and faithfulness, kids will learn that **God is with them no matter what they go through, they can show God's love in small ways, God is bigger than they could ever understand, and they can trust that God will make everything right.**

[DOWNLOAD THIS MONTH'S PARENT DEVOTIONAL](#)

Dear Youth Families-

I hope this new school year is off to a great start for our Bethlehem Youth. I know you are all so busy and life is super hectic, but I would like to encourage our Youth to make growing their faith a priority. Our Youth Ministry Team has been brainstorming ideas on how we can reengage our Youth, motivate them to come to church, and ignite a passion for their faith.

Cont.

With this goal in mind, we want to make you aware of some upcoming events! Please keep reading!

Sincerely,

Niki Traylor

Youth Sunday School Teacher and Children and Youth Ministry Team Chair
on behalf of the CYMT (Children Youth Ministry Team)

CONFIRMAND/MENTOR FELLOWSHIP NIGHT
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 6, 5:00-7:00

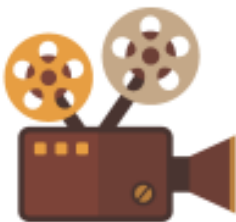
Mentors, Junior Mentors, and Confirmands are invited and encouraged to join us for dinner and an activity. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall. Ms. Margaret promises a fun, festive night that will help us get to know each other and have fun! (Please RSVP to MARGARET via email margaret@bethlehemucc.org via email or through the church office.)

WORK THE PUMPKIN PATCH
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, DURING THE DAY

The youth will be working the Pumpkin Patch. Please contact Niki Traylor or Margaret Eberhart to sign up for a shift! Proceeds from the Patch fund the supplies needed to fill the disaster relief buckets for Church World Service.



OUTDOOR MOVIE/FALL CELEBRATION NIGHT
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 5:00 PM



Join us at the Burgoo Building/new pavilion for pumpkin painting, hotdogs, smores, and an outdoor movie. All ages are welcome for this event. We will have an early, not so scary movie, for the littles followed by a more festive movie for older youth and adults. (Please RSVP to MARGARET via email margaret@bethlehemucc.org or through the church office.)

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YOUTH OUTING, SUNDAY, OCTOBER 27, AFTER CHURCH



The youth (6th-12th graders) will go to Holiday World after worship on Sunday, October 27th. This seemed like the perfect outing to wrap up their October Sunday School curriculum (a rollercoaster themed series on learning to trust God). We would like to extend the opportunity to buy tickets at our group rate (\$30) to anyone in the congregation. This will be the last day Holiday World is open for the season. The park hours that day are 11:00 am - 5:00 pm. We are scheduled to worship outdoors on the 27th, a perfect setup to dress comfy and then head to the park! If you are interested in purchasing tickets, please contact Margaret Eberhart via email or through the church office

margaret@bethlehemucc.org.

LOOKING AHEAD

YOUTH SERVE AT UCS ON SUNDAY,
NOVEMBER 24

(Please RSVP to MARGARET via email

margaret@bethlehemucc.org.

October Sunday School Overview

What we're teaching!

7th-12th (not in confirmation)



UNAFRAID: A 4-Week Series from the Old Testament on Trusting God

SERIES OVERVIEW:

An amusement park ride can spark joy or leave you feeling more than a bit scared. There are twists, turns, and sometimes, a little bit of pain, too. Those things are true in life, too, so how can we learn to overcome our feelings of fear whenever we experience them? In this 4-week series from the Old Testament,

READY FOR RESERVATIONS!

The upgrades to the Burgoo building, along with the construction of the new church pavilion, was completed on August 14th. Since that time, these facilities have been used for Pastor Emily's homecoming & annual Church Picnic, an Eosin group luncheon, the Fish Fry and a birthday party. On October 26th, we will have the Pumpkin Patch movie night and activities in the pavilion. The lights have been installed and the outlets are soon to follow. If you are planning an event and would like to have it outside at the church, please contact the office to make your reservation.



A graphic featuring a blue background with a white, stylized book or document shape in the center. The text "Annual Reports" and "Let's get started!" is written in a bold, black, sans-serif font on the white shape.

Annual Reports
Let's get started!

Attn: Committee Heads

Now that fall is officially here, it's time to start thinking about the ***Bethlehem Annual Report!***

In order to facilitate some of the groundwork for the Annual Report content, I will be sending out emails to all the Committee Heads in the coming days. This will help you to think about current committee members, future committee leadership, and what your committee needs to share with the congregation for the year 2024. This information is important for the **2025 Standing Committees, Elected Boards, Delegates and Representatives** section of the Annual Report. **The deadline for submission of this information is October 31st.** (link [here](#))

This year **the deadline for the Annual Report articles is December 5.** You can submit your report by sending me a Word document or by submitting it via link [here](#) any time between now and December 5th. Please don't wait until the last minute so that we can all enjoy the Christmas holiday season!

Please take the time to review the wonderful work your committee, social group, or Sunday School class has been doing. Remember, our Annual Report is our 'history in the making'.

Thank you in advance!

Patty Oglesby
Church Administrative Coordinator

Welcome, Little Ones



We celebrate the births of Ava Marie Klass (4 lb. 5 oz and 16.5 in) and Hudson Ray Klass (5 lb. 15 oz and 18 in) to David and Sara Klass on August 26. Bethlehem family includes grandparents Gerri and Rick Klass, Aunt Ashley Klass and cousins Keano and Kiara.



Please join us October 20 to celebrate Sheri Schenk's 25-year anniversary at Bethlehem. A reception will be held after the 10:15 am worship service and everyone is invited. Sheri serves as Bethlehem's Director of Music and Organist.



Sometimes it seems that life is a puzzle we are constantly trying to complete. We have pieces we aren't sure where they fit in the larger picture. Times like that call for some down time or activities that take our minds off the situation. How about doing a picture puzzle? They are a good distraction and offer a great sense of accomplishment. If you're interested, stop in Pastor Doug's office/Resource Office and select a puzzle from a wide range of scenes and number of pieces.



UPDATES FROM OUTREACH



October 4-27 PUMPKIN PATCH



The Bethlehem Pumpkin Patch opens for business on Friday, October 4! Pumpkins large and small will be available for purchase. Payment can be put in the Honesty Box located under the tent on Oak Hill Road Monday-Thursday. Volunteers will be on duty Fridays from 3:00-7:00, Saturdays from 9:00-7:00, and Sundays from noon-6:00 to assist you.

Special weekend events will be a Bake Sale sponsored by WEB on Saturday, October 19, and a Movie Night on Saturday, October 26.

Profits from Pumpkin Patch sales fund the annual Bucket Blitz and other projects such as the hygiene kits which were assembled during Vacation Bible School this summer.

Once again, a photo backdrop will be available for making beautiful fall memories. Please spread the word to your friends and families, and plan to visit the Bethlehem Pumpkin Patch!



Cont.

October 6 BUCKET BLITZ

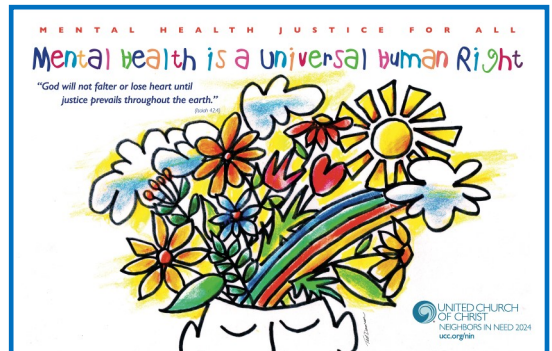
This year's Bucket Blitz is Sunday, October 6. During the Sunday School hour that day, our children and youth classes will gather in the fellowship hall to fill 40 5-gallon buckets with supplies needed for clean-up after such natural disasters as tornadoes, hurricanes, and floods.



Bethlehem is also a designated Bucket Depot, meaning other churches in the area can drop off buckets and other CWS kits. These will then be transported to a drop-off in Indianapolis and distributed by Church World Service to places recovering from natural emergencies.

NEIGHBORS IN NEED OFFERING TO BE COLLECTED IN OCTOBER

Next in the cycle of “5-for-5” special United Church of Christ offerings is Neighbors in Need. This annual offering supports ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds support local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. One-third directly supports CAIM (Council for American Indian Ministries).



The 2024 Neighbors in Need theme is “Mental Health Justice for All: Mental Health is a Universal Human Right”. This offering provides us with an opportunity to re-ignite our efforts to build a more just world for all, dismantling the shame and stigma of mental health challenges.

Cont.

Bethlehem will collect this special offering during the month of October. Giving envelopes will be available in the pews and on tables near the Welcoming Area and church office entrances. Gifts can also be made online at bethlehemucc.org. With your assistance, we together can help our Neighbors in Need.

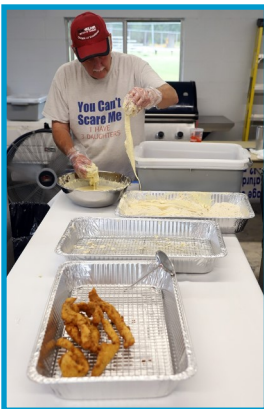


We rejoice with church family members who are celebrating birthdays and anniversaries this month. A full list of birthdays and anniversaries can be found on our website at bethlehem/estar or by contacting the church office (867-2497) for a printed list.

CHURCH COUNCIL

In the September Council meeting, we approved several projects from the property committee, so keep your eyes open for improvements around the building.

If you haven't turned in your pledge card, there is still time! We will start working on the budget later in October, and the more pledge cards we get back, the more accurate our numbers will be.



Altar Flowers

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. Paper forms are available outside the church office.

Remaining available 2024 dates:

November 10
December 1



Financial Recap

August General Account

	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Monthly Beginning Balance	\$ 163,467.94	\$ 300,503.94
Monthly Pledge Deposits	44,881.14	30,912.65
Monthly Other Deposits	758.33	6,654.63
Monthly Operating Disbursements	(43,613.23)	(29,003.67)
Monthly Other Disbursements	(7,360.65)	3,795.30
Transfer Funds to 3-month CD		(250,000.00)
Monthly Ending Balance	<u>\$ 158,133.53</u>	<u>\$ 62,862.85</u>

YTD General Account

Beginning Balance	\$ 182,223.60	\$ 323,301.95
Pledge Deposits	288,300.14	264,675.39
Other Deposits	9,388.32	14,334.74
Operating Disbursements	(339,577.93)	(301,717.01)
Other Disbursements	17,799.40	12,267.78
Transfer Funds to 3-month CD		(250,000.00)
Ending Balance	<u>\$ 158,133.53</u>	<u>\$ 62,862.85</u>



Evansville Tri-State Association (ETSA) News

Zion Evangelical UCC will be having its final worship service on October 27. We hold them in prayer during this difficult time and we celebrate their 175 years of ministry in downtown Evansville. Zion has made the generous decision to gift their building to Aurora, which plans to create 41 apartments. Something dies and something new emerges. Resurrection is not only one moment long past, but also a part of daily life if we have eyes to see. Thanks be to God for 175 years of ministry and a legacy that continues!

On October 6 at 3:00 p.m., the association is invited to gather at St. Paul's Middle Mount Vernon (formerly of Michigan St.) to celebrate the installation of Rev. JD Rose, with a meal immediately to follow. JD has been serving as the designated interim but has now been called to be their settled pastor. We celebrate with St. Paul's and JD!



We have lights 

After a great effort, Denis Hirsch and his son Kyle installed the lights in the new pavilion. They worked many hours, and in the heat, too.



Apple Pies



It's Harvest time – time for picking and enjoying apples! The Eosin Sunday School Class will be selling our famous Dutch Apple Crumb Pies to benefit missions. We will be taking PREPAID orders once again this year. To be assured of getting pies, please complete the form at the bottom of this page and put it in the Eosin mailbox (level 2 by the elevator) or leave it in the church office. Please make your checks out to Eosin. Additional order forms are available in the church office vestibule, Welcoming Area, and narthex.

*This year there is a special incentive to order early. We will be giving away a coupon from Logan's Roadhouse for a dozen of their delicious rolls with each pie order.

The pies will be made and distributed on Thursday, November 14, this year. Please plan to pick up your pies between 2:00 and 5:30 PM that evening.

EOSIN APPLE PIE SALE

Number of Pies _____ @ \$12.00 each total cost _____

Name _____ phone number _____

Email address

Remember to pick up your fresh pies on Thursday, November 14, between 2:00 and 5:30 PM.

Checks should be made out to Eosin.

The office would often be at a loss without the help of wonderful volunteers. This great group assembled the generosity mailing. Supervised by Pastor Doug ;)



Save the Dates!
Cookie Walk
Bake & Treat Sale
December 7 & 8 following
worship services.
Lots of bakers and treat
makers will be needed. Look
for sign-ups in next month's
STAR, Emily's Editions, and
at church entrances.





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.***