
OUR VISION IS TO BE **UNITED** IN SEEKING GOD'S WILL
AND SERVING ALL PEOPLE.



January 2019 ~ *BETHEL RECORD*
Newsletter of: Bethel United Church of Christ
3029 N. Green River Road
Evansville, IN 47715
812-473-0135 www.bethelucc.org

From the Interim Lead Minister . . . Rev. Dr. Stephanie Weiner

“Let your life lightly dance on the edges of Time
like dew on the tip of a leaf.”

Rabindranath Tagore

“Behold, I am doing a new thing; now it springs forth,
do you not perceive it?”

Isaiah 43:19



Happy New Year – a whole new start; a fresh beginning!

And yet, there are many times that can count as a new year; many opportunities to begin again. January 1, the calendar’s new year; the first Sunday in advent, the church’s new year; your birthday, your new year; the first day of school; the first day of a new job; the first day of your married life or your baby’s life; the first day of the fiscal year, depending on when that is for your company.

Actually, every day can be a new beginning. That is what I shared with a congregation, once upon a time, referencing Martin Luther who said he began each new day, remembering he was baptized, which is the ultimate in new beginnings. “So,” I said to the congregation, “Remember you can start again every morning!” Then in an unexpected sermon talk back came the word from the last pew, “Sometimes I start over every hour!”

Winter is a dark time for a new beginning. We are onto the psychological malady of seasonal affective disorder. Moreover, this seems to be a particularly dark time for our country. Maybe it is for you, as well. If so, take a note from Martin Luther’s playbook and defiantly shout back at this darkness “I am Baptized” not I was, but I am baptized. When Luther himself was holed up in a castle translating the Greek Bible into German so that, for the very first time, somewhat regular folks could read the Word of God for themselves, well, while he was doing this he struggled mightily with doubt and discouragement from what he understood to be the devil. And he was known to not only throw the occasional ink pots at whatever was tormenting him and causing him to doubt God’s promises, but while doing so he could be heard throughout the castle grounds shouting “I am baptized.” (Nadia Bolz-Weber, quoted on the internet 1/20/11 from sojo.net (Sojourner’s)).

The Baptism of Christ Sunday is the Sunday after Epiphany. The liturgy of January 13 will give us an opportunity to remember our baptism. Given the pluralistic nature of our congregation as well as our culture, it could be that you or someone you are close to has not been baptized. If so, think about the possibility on the 13th and let me know if you desire the sacrament on the 20th.

With no disrespect to the congregation or any of its leaders, Bethel has been through a dark time: the changes in pastoral leadership over the last 10 years; the going and coming of both church activities and building users; the natural attrition of members; the cultural shift away from organized religion; the maturing of the congregation. Communities of faith are just like individuals – they have their good, and their not so good, times.

Yet, this is a new year for us – and a new era. Bethel is in the midst of an interim time that will lead to a whole new day for the congregation. It is a great time to remember that we are baptized – not were, but are – and every day, every moment is a good time to remember that, even to shout it!

With gratitude for the new thing(s) God is doing among us,

Seeking and serving with you,
Stephanie

From the Council President . . . Deb Wilson

Bethel UCC is an open and welcoming church. We have experienced several new visiting families of late, and, as you know, it is important to embrace these persons beyond the walls of our facility. What if we each took it upon ourselves to form a small group of maybe 6-8 people and include a new family or person into that group? People become more comfortable when they feel they know someone in the church, and it is a good way to get acquainted with them as well. The organizing does not have to be complicated, perhaps just going out to lunch or dinner, or entertaining them in your home for snacks or a meal. Often once we leave church to go about our busy lives, we lay aside the importance of further communication with new people. Let's try this reaching out and including as we build up our Bethel by sharing all the gifts we have to offer both as a church and as individuals.

I would offer one caution as we welcome new people. As we continue to build our faith and spirituality, please respect each person and restrain ourselves from gossip and corner conversations. It just takes one negative comment to change the thinking of a person. Rather, let's counsel, build up, and refrain from judgments. This is what it means to be a genuine Christian.

In God's love, Deb Wilson

From the Program Associate . . . Debra Niswonger

Good things from 2018: I have only been here for a short period of time, but I have been lucky to experience some of the great things that have been happening at Bethel. I have seen the generosity, be it from all of the items donated for the Thanksgiving baskets, or people joining in to help conquer a task. I have experienced friendly faces and an incredible feeling of belongingness since I have started working here. I am greeted with many smiles and hellos throughout Sunday mornings.



We have had some great events! We had a very successful Trunk or Treat and a turnout larger than we could have imagined. We had many donations for the Thanksgiving baskets and were able to help provide assistance for ten families who were very grateful. The youth have a blast on Wednesday nights at youth group. We get to check in and talk about our weeks, get a break in the middle of the week to play games, and spend time with friends.

Hopes for the New Year: I hope the new year brings more smiling faces to Bethel, along with excitement for new adventures and events. I hope the new year brings calm after the hustle and bustle of the end of 2018. We will begin a new series for both Elementary and Middle and High School Sunday School. The Middle and High Schoolers will be doing a four week series called Boss that will teach about authority. It will include props, set elements such as pillars of idols and a boss's desk. The lessons also include teaching about defeating worry, anxiety, obsession, and clutter. Elementary schoolers will be doing a four week session called Blast Off that will include crafts, games, and set elements such as rockets and airplanes. The lessons will teach about spending time with God, growing our faith, and sharing God's story.

SUNDAYS IN JANUARY:

January 6 – Epiphany; the Wise People Cometh; We share communion; the texts for the day are Isaiah 60:1-6; Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14; Ephesians 3:1-12; and Matthew 2:1-12.

January 13 – We celebrate the Baptism of Christ with the texts Isaiah 43:1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8:14-17; and Luke 3:15-17 21-22. This is a “Hymn Sing” Sunday. Come ready to suggest your favorites.

January 20 – During this week of prayer for Christian unity, we will consider Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; I Corinthians 12:1-11; and John 2:1-11.

January 27 – Our Winter Congregational Meeting! The texts are Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, and 8-10; Psalm 19; I Corinthians 12:12-31a; and Luke 4:14-21.

WINTER CONGREGATIONAL MEETING: We will meet as mandated by our bylaws on Sunday, January 27. All meetings are important and especially this one as we vote the statement on inclusivity which, if passed, would be sent to the national office so that our position on Open and Affirming is clear. We will also hear a report from the Search Committee and vote the budget for 2019. You don't want to miss all of this, and a scrumptious meal, and good camaraderie! Entrée, desserts and beverages will be provided. Let's make this a real Bethel family meal by accepting assignments and bringing portions for eight people.

A - M – Vegetables and Sides

N - Z – Salads

PLEASE SEE THE ENCLOSED LETTER AND BALLOT CONCERNING THE INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT.



WEATHER ADVISORIES:

If EVSC (Evansville-Vanderburgh School Corporation) is closed or delayed due to inclement weather, Bethel will follow their schedule. If school is closed or gets out early, church activities that day will be cancelled. If school has a delayed start, Bethel will delay the start of the day by the same amount of time.



Too cold to walk outside? Get your steps in at our gym. The best time is 9:00 a.m. Stop by the office to let us know that you are in the building, or you can call from the kitchen.

OUR COMMUNITY BREAKFAST will be Saturday, January 26 from 8:30 to 9:30. Carmen Mazick will be hosting.

IRON MEN: Will continue to meet through on Wednesdays at 7:30 a.m. at Friendship Diner.

LUNCH BUNCH will meet on Wednesday, January 9 at 12:30 p.m. at China Bistro. Contact Doris Rohlfer at 812-303-6024 if you will be attending.



ABOUT THE FEBRUARY RECORD: The deadline for the newsletter is the third Wednesday, January 16, with it being mailed following the annual meeting on January 27. Our thanks to those who stuff and label the newsletters. A change for this month only, we will prep the newsletter for mailing on Tuesday the 29th.

ADMINSTRATION TEAM:

How are we doing? As of this writing, we are still receiving faith commitments to underwrite the 2019 budget. We are hopeful of reaching 100 responses. More details will be available in the Annual Report and Preparatory Reports for the Congregational meeting. We expect to have them available on Sunday, January 13.

Welcome, Geri Lovelace! Geri is our new child care coordinator. She will be in the nursery every Sunday from 8:45 a.m. until the last child is picked up after worship. She comes with glowing references from her work at Westminster Childcare Center, and her grandson Andrew Kempf!

About the interim: As decided by Council, on the recommendation of the Personnel Committee, the interim contract has been extended. The Interim Lead Pastor will be gone a Sunday in January, February, May and June and will away Tuesday – Thursday the fourth week of each month. This regularizes the time already allocated in the previous contracts. It will also help both the church, and Stephanie, ease through the transitional time that remains.

MISSIONS TEAM:

Mission Focus for January: While we appreciate the opportunity to learn about additional ministries outside the congregation, January (with its utility bills) is a great opportunity to focus on the ways our building is in service to the community. We host English as a Second Language every weekday; occasional weekend events for community groups like Relay for Life, United Caring Services, the Sewing Guild; a 4 H group; Another Chance for Animals; and starting in January, a Parkinson's Support Group and an AA group. We continue to explore possibilities for early childhood education. All the while, we continue our main ministry of helping one another seek God's will and serve God's people. Have a few extra shekels this month? We can put them to good use!

Let's be care-full about the earth. It is the only one we have! From Climate Reports to Moral Imperatives: Major climate reports have been released that highlight the impact of climate change on our world and the urgent need to act. To help faith communities understand the insights of these reports and the moral imperatives that arise from them, two client scientists will join a theologian and minister to discuss the moral imperatives suggested by these reports: Katharine Hayhoe - climate scientist at Texas Tech University and coauthor of the National Climate Assessment; Naomi Oreskes - professor at Harvard University and a leading public voice in discussions about the science of climate change; Jim Antal - a long-time leader in faith activism on climate change and recent author of "Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change."

This webinar is co-hosted by the Rev. Dr. Brooks Berndt of the United Church of Christ Environmental Justice Ministry and the Rev. Michael Malcom of Alabama Interfaith Power & Light on January 9, 2019 at 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time. Sign up now to join the webinar! Even if you can't make its scheduled time, still sign up, and we will send you a recording of it.

<https://ucc.zoom.us/meeting/register/d8adcdc144b48e7bd746f627e8486654>

More: The fourth annual Tri-State Creation Conference will be held Saturday, February 9, 2019 at Aldersgate UMC, in the morning, exact time TBD. Keynote address will be presented by Rev. Fletcher Harper, the director of Green Faith, offering an inspiring and challenging vision on what it means to "green" our faith and be a part of the movement to ensure a future for all life. Breakout Sessions

include “Hey Garden Guy,” community-based creation activism from a faith perspective, solar energy for home and congregation. Tri-State Creation Care is a local interfaith movement inspiring people of all faiths and no faith to love the Creation we love better.

Days for Girls: We have been invited by the Lincoln Land Association to a March 9 “Work Day for Girls,” at St. Peter’s UCC Church, 12338 N St. Peter’s Church Road, Lamar, IN. This is to aid girls to attend school in Africa. There are jobs for everyone, sewers and non-sewers alike, men and women, young and old. St. Peter’s is known for its hospitality. Child care is provided. Food is available all day, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Come and go as you are available. Gayle Morley Jahn is the contact person. She will be glad to answer your questions, 812-529-8232. The word is that this is among the most rewarding and most fun projects around. Bring a carload!



The Helping Hand Fund enables us to help members of our congregation, and the community, with extraordinary expenses. We can’t be a part of someone’s regular budget, but we can help in a pinch. Your support is always welcome.

Ride for Habitat: Our friend, the Rev. Brian Buschkill, bike rides for Habitat. He’d like to get a group together to start from Evansville, rather than having to meet others elsewhere. The ride is May 5-11. Brian assures us that everyone can ride, and the length of time committed depends on the person. You don’t have to ride all six days. He encourages our participation by referencing an 85-year-old who does this each year. Contact Brian at St. Peter’s UCC (Highland) 812-867-5271 or saintpetepastor@gmail.com.



FAITH FORMATION

Activities for Children and Youth are on page three.

Looking Ahead: Opportunities for our youth in 2019 and 2020!

- ASP: June 9 - 15. Scott Scales and Tamara Payne are heading up this ministry. Keep those Scrip orders coming in!
- General Synod in Milwaukee, Wisconsin: June 21-25.

- 2020 National Youth Event at Purdue: July 22-25, 2020. We would like to get all the youth in the ETSA involved and go as an Association. 2020 NYE Youth Leadership - Tracey Stewart has put out a call to all youth (14-19) to help plan the National Youth Event. There will be little to no travel as meetings will be virtual.

Super Bowl Subs: The 2019 ASP Team will once again be selling sub sandwiches (and wraps) for Super Bowl Sunday. All subs and wraps will cost \$6 each and can be customized with your choice of meat(s) and cheese/lettuce/tomato. The Team will prepare the subs/wraps and have them ready for pick up in Fellowship Hall following the worship service on Super Bowl Sunday, February 3, 2019. Use the enclosed order form for your subs/wraps. Please have orders (and payment) turned in no later than Sunday, January 27. Checks should be made payable to Bethel UCC (ASP Subs on the memo line). Contact Debra Niswonger, Tamara Payne, Scott Scales, or the Church Office if you have any questions. As always, thank you for supporting the Bethel ASP Team!

Three classes are available for adults, and newcomers are always welcome. Consider joining the Bethel Book Club; the Seekers (contemporary issues); or the Gideon Class (Bible study) at 9:00 a.m.

Third Thursday Brown Bag: Available during the day? How about gathering to discuss our faith via the Bible, a contemporary book, or a Ted Talk. Bring a sandwich! The microwave is ready for heating up your soup. Dessert and beverage are provided. Join us on Thursday, January 17, 12:00-1:30 p.m. in Fellowship Hall. This month's focus is, "Why Religion?" by Elaine Pagels. You don't have to read the book first, but it would be helpful.



Round Tables: What comes after the Second Sunday Celebration? The Third Sunday Round Tables! This month it will be a pre-congregational meeting about the budget, the search, the inclusivity statement and life-in-general at Bethel UCC. Please join us following worship on January 20, and bring your suggestions for future topics!

CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TEAM:

2019 Resolution: To Attend the Second Sunday Celebrations! Last month we had a full Fellowship Hall with members, friends, and even first time visitors. We munched on a donated Christmas cake and cookies. We collected donations for the Heifer Fund International. Cindy Schnapf shared the secret of her special Nativity set with us. We chatted and laughed a lot! Please join us!

Special Feature of January's SSC: Tamara Payne, a part of the Appalachian Service Project leadership team, will be available to explain and run through the process for ordering scrip in support of ASP.

Snowbirds! We'll miss you! But, we don't want you to miss us! If you are headed south for any length of time, would you mind giving the office your temporary address? In this day and age there are so many ways to communicate, but sometimes it just works better to use snail mail. You might include the dates and if you would like only the office to have the information.

Trivia Night: Everyone is invited to the Trivia Night – Winter Warm Up on Thursday, January 24th. Please get your team of up to six people ready for some fun! The fun starts at 6:00 p.m. – eats and treats – followed by Trivia at 6:45 p.m.



Nametags: If you have a nametag, would you please wear it more often? It would help the new members and frequent visitors connect names and faces. If you don't want to clip your nametag to your clothing, there are black ribbon "necklaces" you can attach to your nametag. They are in the baskets attached to the stands. Also, there are disposable sticker nametags at the Hospitality Center that you may use. The stickers can also be used by visitors who want a nametag.

EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE: The Early Childhood Committee continues to gather information about the best way to use our resources to serve the community. Our talks with outside agencies have been productive. We are hopeful that our careful study will soon help Bethel make decisions about early childhood care. ~ Carolyn Bennett, Chair

IMPORTANT USHER'S MEETING: Ushers are vital to our congregation's growth. They are often the first and, therefore the lasting, impression that all are welcome here. There will be a meeting of ushers at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, January 20. It is designed for head ushers and new ushers. If you are interested in serving and haven't been asked, contact Carolyn Stephens. She will be delighted to know of your interest.

ALTAR FLOWERS: Altar flowers in memory or honor of a person or event, may be ordered by signing up on the flower chart in the hallway at the side of Fellowship Hall. The cost is \$36, payable to Bethel UCC, and can be dropped off in the church office or placed in the collection plate on Sunday. Please let the office know which Sunday you sign up for. If you do not take the flowers with you after worship, they will be shared with others.



BETHEL BUDDIES: If you are aware of someone in your family, neighborhood, or workplace who really needs an extra hug, please take them one of the Bethel Buddies located in the pews. If you have any new/like-new stuffed animals to donate, contact Carmen Mazick or bring them to the church office. Thank you.

JOYS AND CONCERNS: Since this is a composite of joys and concerns since the last newsletter, many of the health issues have been overcome. So, whether a joy or concern, we pray for:

Becky Fehd	India Vannatter
Vicki Tichenor	Jackson Schultheis
Judy Olinger	Scott Kirk
Linda Garrett	Trish Marshal
Joan Ritter	Olivia J.
Sharon Greubel	Bruce Roth
Jan Nevill	James
Jerry Greubel	Karoll
Roberta Carter	Cindy Schnapf and her family

We celebrate:
the marriage of Makenzie Lawson and Sam Schentrup;
the birth of Cooper Morgan Lovelace.

We wish the Rev. Elmer Paniamogan well as he returns to the Philippines for six months; and the Rev. Neneng Paniamogan well as she tries out life in Wisconsin. We are grateful for both of their involvements and faithful ministries and pray for their quick return.

OUR MINISTRY IS EXTENDED THROUGH:

Greeter/Hospitality:

6	Linda Hape	20	Nita Voorhees
13	Donna Condi	27	Joan English

Liturgists:

6	TBD	20	Janel Allen
13	Laurel Vaughn	27	Jo Haller



Ushers: (The head usher for January is Bob English.)

6	Larry Appman; Susan & Greg Gordon
13	Bob English; Jo & Charlie Haller; Leesa Scales
20	Phillip Damm; Brad Neidig; Greg Neidig
27	Barry Burleigh; Aaron Krueger; Carolyn Stephens; Kai Webster

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES:

2	Carolyn & Bob Bennett	31	Janet & Ronald Miller (54)
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JANUARY BIRTHDAYS:

3	James Jett	12	Maureen Parmar	24	Doris Burleigh
6	Donna Mackey	14	Tamara Payne		Keegan English
7	Gina McCalister	16	Don Creek		David Willis
8	Lindsey Neidig		Lucas Neidig	25	Steve Hape
9	Mardell Puckett	17	Deborah Neidig		Harold Shafer
10	Doris Lamkin	18	Sarah Tabor	26	Isabelle Bender
11	Nancy Bullinger		Laurel Vaughn	27	Haley Schmitt
	Ritchie Taylor	20	Bridget Greer	28	Aaron Krueger
12	Clark Absher	23	Owen Bender	30	Stetson Nance
	Craig Neidig		Jennifer Nance	31	Kalia Garvey

MEMORIALS:

A contribution in memory of Betty Ruth Williams (aunt of Diane Voigt) was given to the Memorial Fund by Phillip Damm.

A contribution in memory of Phyllis Yarber was given to the Memorial Fund from Andy Yarber.



Dear Friends at Bethel: On behalf of the entire team at **Tri-State Food Bank**, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for your gift of \$300. Thank you for playing such a vital role in our mission to end hunger in our community. ~ Glenn Roberts, Executive Director

Dear Friends at Bethel: Thank you for your November 27 donation of \$1000 to **United Caring Services**. Your generosity is helping people who are homeless, hungry and hurting regain their dignity. ~ Jason Emmerson, Executive Director

Dear Bethel UCC: Thank you for your donation of \$25 to **Albion Fellows Bacon Center**. Your belief in Albion and our mission makes it possible for us to provide critical services, at no cost to those in need. Realizing that there are many deserving charities you could support, we are honored that you chose Albion. ~ Mallorie Cloum, Community Engagement Director

Nursing/Rehab/Retirement Home/Homebound

Atria Assisted Living 618-9685
5311 Rosebud Ln., Newburgh, IN 47630

Georgia & Arlin McRae (Apt. 313)
(812)568-6119
Barbara Schmitt

Core of Nursing Rehabilitation
P O Box 325, 510 W Medcalf St., Dale IN 47523

Jana Bonifer (812)937-7073

Cypress Grove 853-2993
4255 Medwell Dr., Newburgh, IN 47630

Robert Carter

Good Samaritan Home 476-4912
601 N Boeke Rd., Evansville IN 47711

Betty Gustafson (South 549-1)
Marion Nauert (541)

Hamilton Point 858-5300
3833 Eli Pl., Newburgh IN 47630

Gerald & Barbara Griepenstroh (209)
Darlene Neidig (107)

Heritage Center 429-0700
1201 W Buena Vista Rd., Evansville IN 47710

Victor Luhring (149)

Mt. Vernon Nursing & Rehab
1415 Country Club Rd., Mt. Vernon IN 47620

David Emery

North Park Nursing Center 425-5243
650 Fairway Dr., Evansville IN 47710

Nancy Westbo

Oasis 303-3310
4301 Washington Ave., Evansville, IN 47714

Pat Perigo (412)

Protestant Home 476-3360
3701 Washington Ave., Evansville IN 47714

Eloise Buente (11-N)
Jeanne Carter (Apt. 29 S)
Warren McCullough (4-ABN)

River Pointe 475-2822
3001 Galaxy Dr., Evansville IN 47715

B. J. Caldemeyer (330-B)

Signature Healthcare 473-4761
5233 Rosebud Ln., Newburgh IN 47630

Jackie Schuerger (206)

Walnut Creek 420-1540
525 Bente Court, Evansville IN 47715

Betty Hawkins (7)
Doris Lamkin

Sylvia Stamm

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David Willis, Night Caretaker

Rev. Donald Bernhardt, Pastor Emeritus