

Bethel United Church of Christ
3029 N Green River Road
Evansville IN 47715
812-473-0135
www.bethelucc.org

MAY 2021 BETHEL RECORD/NEWSLETTER

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Pentecost ~ May 23



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

Because we affirm the face of God in all, we fully welcome and include people of all abilities, ages, cultures, gender identities, races, sexual orientations, and socio-economic backgrounds, into our life and ministry.

FROM THE PASTOR . . . Rev. Sam Buehrer

“Update on Ministries - Continued”

If there is anything that I have learned during this season of COVID is that everything is in flux and that I/we must be ready for change. That has certainly been true as more research and data come out about the virus, and we learn that some things we can now do safely were earlier considered very risky. Adding to this is, the more folk that either receive the vaccination or become immune to the virus in its current state (not including possible variants), the more we can open things up, but only if we do so safely. Adding to this issue is that from my observations, every single one of us has a different definition of what is safe about anyone activity. This being said, Bethel UCC is now scheduled to gather in worship in the sanctuary on May 2 for the first time in over a year. Many precautions have been taken to make this worship time as safe as possible. We are utilizing a sign up list for reservations. In the first 24 hours of the list being available, of the original 26 slots (Pews) available, 20 were reserved. We also sent out with the reservations expectations for how we intend to lower the risk and keep folks as safe as possible while in worship. The Worship Team is committed to evaluating how things went on that first Sunday and adjustments may be made if we see that we can improve the worship experience without taking on greater risk. Stay tuned, as I suspect this will continue to be a work in progress as we come to some level of “normalcy.”

I am also pleased to share that because Bethel UCC chose to become Open & Affirming and has placed a rainbow on our church sign, that we received several inquiries recently from folks who saw that sign and called us up to inquire if we were truly a safe place for them. One call was from a parent of a child who recently came out as lesbian. The other call was from a Jewish family who was looking for a faith-based preschool that would honor their child and the Jewish faith in which they were raising their child. Thank you all for taking what was a bold step a few years ago. Your willingness to live out the gospel in this way is making a difference in the world.

Do keep all of us in your prayers. We are about a great work and a great work always needs prayers to succeed.

Peace,
Pastor Sam

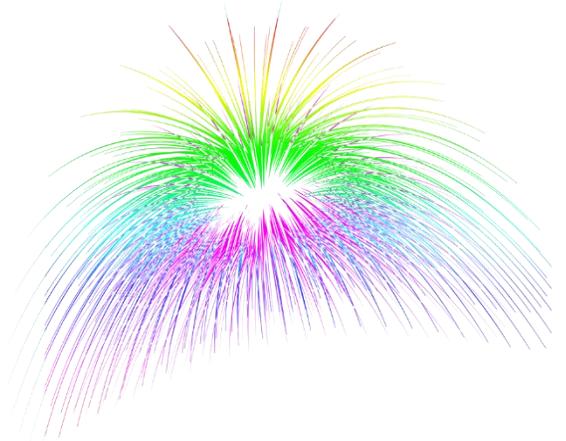
The deadline for the June newsletter is May 19th.

FAITH FORMATION UPDATES:

• **Calling All Graduates!** We would like to recognize you whether you are graduating from High School, College, or any other continuing education program. Please call the office and let them know who you are and where you are graduating from, as well as your plans from here. We are proud of you!

• **Merom Campers!** Summer is almost here and you know what that means . . . Catch the Merom Spirit! The time to sign up for those camps is here! Registration fees have gone up significantly this year. Please let your church help. Please contact the church office if you would like to know more about how your church can help you go to camp this year.

• **Children's Church** is coming back! We will not have Children's Church this Sunday since we'd like everyone to have a chance to sit in a church pew again. BUT Children's Church will resume for grades K-5 on May 9th. Can't wait to see you!



REPORT FROM BETHEL'S JUSTICE NETWORK: The Bethel Justice Network is nearing the end of an exploratory year with CAJE (Congregations Acting for Justice and Empowerment). We are a group of Bethel members who have learned about the call to justice ministry and the power that comes from participating in a proven process that brings results.

Justice Ministry is important to the Bethel congregation because we believe in a God of justice. In CAJE, many faith traditions work together to seek long-term solutions to injustices in our community.

God calls us to seek and help those who cry out for justice; those who perhaps cannot speak for themselves; and those who have been forgotten or abandoned.

HOW CAN YOU HELP? The annual CAJE *Nehemiah Action Assembly* is scheduled for Monday, May 10, 2021, at 6 p.m. (via Zoom and Facebook). You are encouraged to attend, and we hope Bethel will be well-represented at this event, for which the attendance goal is 1,400 justice seekers. When a Bethel friend invites you to attend the Nehemiah Action, please say yes! Pre-registration is required, and we will provide a registration information link closer to the date. Maybe you are not comfortable with Zoom or Facebook? Pastor Sam will host a group in Fellowship Hall to view the event. To make your reservation now, contact Janel Allen at jsallen007@aol.com or 812-431-6735.

Please mark your calendar for CAJE on May 10!

“ . . . and what does the Lord require of you, but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?” -- Micah 6:8

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH OFFERING: The Strengthen the Church (STC) Offering reflects the shared commitment of people across the United Church of Christ to cooperatively build up the UCC. Conferences and the national setting equally share the gifts given by members and friends through their local congregations. The funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and innovation in existing congregations. By your generosity to this offering, you build up the Body of Christ.



As God calls our congregations to be the church in new ways, your generosity will plant new churches, awaken new ideas in existing churches, and develop the spiritual life in our youth and young adults. Please consider making this offering, which is our May special offering, part of your giving.

JOYS & CONCERNS – Please pray for those who are suffering from physical, emotional, or mental health issues. Pray for families, for neighbors, for the community at large. “And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

We pray for: Vicki Tichenor

Family and Friends Serving in the Active Military - We hold in our prayers:

- * Scott and Will Kirk, Air Force, grandsons of Carmen Mazick.
- * Jacob Swanson, Army, grandson of Ruth Willis.

Memorials:

A contribution was given in memory of Evelyn Vanhooser to the Music Fund for the Zimbelstern, by Doris Rohlfer.

A contribution was given in memory of Charlotte Appman to the Music Fund for the Zimbelstern, by Larry Appman.

A contribution was given in memory of Jerry Greubel to the Ironmen Group by Sharon Greubel.

Happy May Anniversaries to:

- | | | | |
|----|---------------------------|----|----------------------------|
| 2 | Sheri & Gerald Hudson | 17 | Louella & Edward Komuves |
| | Marci & Steve Schmitt | 19 | Juanita & Elmer Paniamogan |
| 4 | Jennifer & Kraig Nance | 29 | Staci & Chad Burleigh |
| 7 | Julie & Ron Vogel | | |
| 8 | Suzanne & Robert Farney | | |
| 9 | Maureen & Harshad Parmar | | |
| | Lori & Robert Vogel | | |
| 10 | Michele & David Vanhooser | | |



Happy May Birthdays to:

1	Linda Garrett	12	Christopher Neiswinger	22	Mary Louise Oswald
2	Rachel Luttrull	13	Jennifer Webster	23	Michael Vannatter
3	Julie Vogel	14	Kyra Webster	24	Marilyn Baggerly
5	Chance Webster	15	Damien Bonifer		Bob Bennett
9	Micah Pricher	16	Carlos Haskins	27	Steve Schmitt
10	Luke Lawson	17	Carter Burleigh	28	Charles Haller
	Sharon Lawson	20	Noel McRae	29	Michael Vanhooser
	Rick Olson	22	Logan Howell	30	Stephanie Weiner



Dear Bethel Friends: I wish to thank you for the cards that you send to me at various times throughout the year. I enjoy getting them and appreciate them very much. I think of you so often. In Christ,
Georgia Lee McRae

Dear Bethel UCC: The **Evansville (Virtual) CROP Walk** safely raised \$8,480 in 2020. We couldn't have done it without your support. Bethel UCC raised \$300 for CROP in 2020. Thank you for your support. ~
Rev. Michael Erwin

Dear Friends & Family: As spring awakens us to renewed life, with the emergence of budding flowers and new blooms, I am reminded life begins long before evidence of such newness is visible. Just beneath the surface, seeds are sprouting roots making read for what shall soon appear. In many ways, your generosity through **Strengthen the Church** offerings does just this. Your generosity seeds the work and witness of the national setting. It is your faithful support in giving that gives root to the many signs of ever-emerging life that springs forth in the form of new ministries, platforms, and advocacy. With deep gratitude and love,
Rev. Traci D. Blackmon, Assoc. Gen. Minister, Justice & Local Church Ministries, UCC

BETHEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST STAFF (812) 473-0135

www.bethelucc.org

<https://www.facebook.com/BethelUCCEvansville/>

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Harold Golday, Custodian Rev. Donald Bernhardt, Pastor Emeritus

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Sunday
May 9

