

October 2021

BETHEL MESSENGER



October

Bethel UCC, W4225 County Line Road, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020
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From the Pastor

Just southwest of Valders on Marken Road we spotted a field filled with what seemed like over 50 cranes, gathering to head south for the winter. All summer long you see them in pairs of two in the fields. With them they may have their long legged young, one or two chicks. They're loud birds, with their call being heard some distance from where they are grazing. Speaking of grazing, they can also upset the farmers as they relish pulling up and snacking on the newly emerging corn plants. Tom was kind enough to pull over the car as I got out and took a couple of pictures to send to our friend in California.

We had been down that way to take a look at the woods. His brother had called to say the county, or perhaps the power company, had taken down some trees that were leaning over the power line. I was shocked to see all the dead trees. I am not sure if they are all ash having fallen victim to the Emerald Ash Borers that are decimating the ashes or trees having died because of the wet summer in the swampy land. Whatever the case, the site was sad to see.

As I looked around and further into the woods I started to see other signs of life. In the midst of the dying ash trees were the bright red leaves of a swamp maple. Tall and thin, it had obviously grown trying to reach for the sun, but surrounded by the taller ash trees it had put all its' energy into reaching the sunlight. I shifted my gaze from looking at the dying ash to searching for signs of life. I began to spot more and younger swamp maples. (or as my Wikipedia search told me Red Maples.)

According to the "Internet" just like the grazing cranes the swamp maples can be troublesome.

If you are seeking high quality lumber from a woodlot you may remove the young trees.

For me, well, I saw new life in the midst of loss. Over the years the area may have been occupied by poplars, then the ashes, and as time had gone on the maples were trying to make their presence known. Each change was a part of the life cycle of the woods. But the Emerald Ash Borers have accelerated the change, leaving the woods in our region standing bare with only the grey skeletons of the former trees in view. I had to look deeper, beyond the stark trunks, to see the new life.

The Ecumenical Pastors group had met this week. The unofficial leader went around asking each of us how are churches were faring after the last year. We all reported that we felt the churches were doing well financially, but several had concerns about attendance. One pastor brought up a book he had read, *The Myth of the Dying Church*, and supported the theory that the church will emerge stronger even though we have been losing members for decades. I have not read the book and therefore cannot begin to support or disagree with their theory.

What we all were able to agree about was that the Pandemic has sped up the decline in attendance in churches. It is a hard thing to see, just as the skeletons of the ash trees are hard to see! But I hope that even as church attendance declines we can keep our eyes open for signs of new life. I guess what I am trying to say is, don't give up just yet. We may not know what our "new normal" will be, but what is coming may be stronger and more beautiful than we can imagine. After all, those swamp maples are mighty pretty. Wishing you peace, Pastor Diane

Looking Ahead to Upcoming Events:

November 6th Lakeland holds a special Interfaith Event

November 7th We will celebrate Totenfest.

November 24th Gloria Dei hosts the Ecumenical Thanksgiving Service

November 28th Advent begins.

December 11th Decorate Church

December 12th Christmas Caroling

December 19th Sunday School presents their Christmas Program.



Thank You

Thank you goes out to Dana Dunton, Cary Johannes, and Bonnie Ziegler for leading worship when it is an off week for Pastor Diane and for the two Sundays of vacation. We are blessed to have them in our midst and thank God for their leadership.

Crop Walk

The Crop Walk will be held October 10th at 12:30 in Howards Grove. Registration material is available in the Narthex. There will be 2 and 4 mile walks. Last year 4 friend dogs joined us in the walk, along with their families.

Sunday School News

Sunday school classes are back in the building! Maybe a little different with masks but at least all together. We had a great group of students, teachers, helpers and mothers walking in the Ada Firemen's parade on [September 12th](#). Thank you very much goes to the Vernon Rietbrock family (Kim, Terri, Diane, Rick, Erin and Nicholas) for the sandwiches, chips and drinks. We began our September classes slowly by decorating bags for the chili supper. Teacher's meeting was held on [September 26th](#) to plan our yearly events. Information will follow in next months paper.



[Sunday](#) School Superintendent,
Mardell Blohm

Communion Sunday Change

In October we will celebrate Communion on October 10th. We will be celebrating World Wide Communion Sunday. Thank you for your kindness in allowing the change.

Consistory Minutes

September 14th, 2021

Members Present: Kim Rietbrock, Patte Puetz, Kris Dirks, Mary Johnston, Rachel Voss, Steve Blohm, Pastor Diane Cayemberg

The meeting was called to order at 6:32 pm.

Regular Meeting

The secretary minutes from August were reviewed. There was a motion (Kris/Patte) to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

The treasurer reports were reviewed for August. There was a motion (Patti/Mary) to approve all the treasurer reports. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Review

- Cindy Meyer (Secretary) – Talked about deadlines for annual reports to be submitted for the annual meeting.
 - Discussed possible new copy machine next year when contract expires – Cindy would like to be included in that meeting.
 - Average time spent each week making copies, bulletins & other documents 1-2 hours
- Crystal DuCharme (Janitor) – Crystal expressed concerns about mold in the basement, on the walls, floor boards, furniture & costumes and also along the floor boards in the meeting room. She has cleaned all areas and sanitized with

Lysol, which seems to be working. Members discussed possible need for another dehumidifier to address the moisture issue. She also discovered fresh mouse droppings; Kris, will call the exterminator about possibly spraying again.

- Average time spent each week cleaning during Covid ½-3/4 hour, and it is 3-4 hours when church is in full session with Sunday School.
- Ken Matzdorf (Technology Team) – No immediate concerns.
 - Prep time each week takes an average of 1-3 hours depending on what's going on and if there are new songs/materials being added.
 - Church service is being recorded once a month, and the DVD can be checked out from the church's library. The group discussed possible purchase of a portable DVD player, which could also be checked out by members.
 - There will be a rotation between the volunteers to do slides for funerals & Weddings – there now is a charge for this service of \$50 that will be given to the volunteer putting and operating the slides during these times.
 - Operation of slides and screens during church service – The committee is looking for two more volunteers (contact Ken Matzdorf if you are interested).
 - Bonnie Ziegler
 - Jim Raquet
 - Lisa Grubisic
 - Ken Matzdorf

- Carol Matzdorf
- Faye Spindler

Pastor's Report:

- September 19th – Sunday School reconvenes with masks.
- October 10th – Crop Walk – Registration will be from 12:00-12:30 with the walk starting at 12:30 in Howard's Grove
- October 13th – Confirmation class begins.
- Thanksgiving Eve Service will be held at Gloria Dei Church with services led by Rev. James Liddle.

Old Business:

- 1) Review of upcoming Schedule:
 - September 19th – Sunday School Begins
 - September 26th – Bonnie Ziegler will lead worship.
 - October 3rd – Dana Dunton will lead worship – with **NO** communion
 - October 6th – Chili Supper – Pickup Service **ONLY** from 11am-6:30pm
 - October 10th – Pastor Diane will lead worship **WITH** Communion – Worldwide Communion Sunday (prepackage communion will ONLY be available at this time)
 - October 31st – Cary Knier Johannes to lead worship
 - November 7th – Totenfest & Communion
 - November 14th – Bonnie Ziegler will lead worship
 - November 25th Thanksgiving
 - December 19th – Sunday School Christmas Program at 10 am.
 - February 6th – Annual Meeting. Church worship with communion will begin at 9:30 am with the meeting to follow the service. NO Sunday School that day.

- 2) Chili Supper – Drive-thru/Pickup service only – with the possibility of pre-orders. Pam and Jim Raquet have been organizing all plans for that day.
- 3) 160th Anniversary Committee – Mary Johnston reported that the committee has met several times and has been looking at materials to add to the timeline created by the 150th Committee. They are planning activities for the two services in 2022 to commemorate anniversary dates in February & March.
- 4) Fall Cleanup/Inside Cleanup – Is not needed this year.

New Business

- Reviewed Compensation for Paid Positions in contemplation of budget preparation.
- The Building & Property Committee will inspect the property and report back at our next meeting if budget must include repair needs.
- Discussion Christmas Scheduled.

There was a motion (Patte/Steve) to adjourn at 8:35pm. The motion carried unanimously. We ended with the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,
Rachel Voss

United Church Men and Women

The United Church Men and Women will be holding their banquet at Grace Congregational United Church of Christ in Two Rivers at 6:30 on October 21st. Pastor Diane has tickets for the event. The United Church Men and Women started as the United Church Men with the goal of raising funds for scholarships for students seeking to go into ministry. Currently one scholarship goes to a student at Lakeland University, one to a Seminary student, and one to a UCC Minister who has educational debt.

UCC Camps

The United Church Camps Incorporated has shared this important announcement. As you have heard the land that had become Pilgrim Center was sacred land for the Wimbabago/ HoChunk peoples. We have been awaiting the announcement of the "new" name for the Church camp for some time. Here is the announcement from Glenn Svetnicka,

"I am writing to you today with important news to share. United Church Camps, Inc.'s (UCCI) Outdoor Ministry site in Green Lake, Wisconsin, is being renamed. The new name is **Daycholah Center**.

Daycholah is the original Ho-Chunk name for Green Lake. This announcement comes because of a thorough process that involved many stakeholders, discussions, prayers, and a deep desire to reflect the mission and ministry of UCCI. This new name recognizes that this land was and remains a sacred place for Native Tribes. UCCI's Outdoor Ministry has a unique role and opportunity to restore the voice of Native Americans, acknowledge their stewardship of this sacred place, and begin a journey with this one small reparative step toward building strong, supportive, and sustained positive relationships with our indigenous siblings." "UCCI's commitment to our mission and values continues to guide us and is in accord with The First Indigenous Principle. The first indigenous principle declares: "Respect the Earth and have a Sacred Regard for All Living Things." The UCCI Mission Statement reads: "We will love God, all others, and the earth." With these core values aligned, we are taking the next step in applying them to ourselves with the formal renaming of Pilgrim Center to Daycholah Center.

Our commitment to the sacred place that is Daycholah Center, and the community created when people gather there is not changing. Judnard Henry, Daycholah Center Managing Director, states it perfectly: ***"Renaming is an appropriate and necessary first step on our journey toward a future where all are welcome and included and have a voice. We will continue to grow as a sacred place of love, a sanctuary, a community of inclusion and belonging, a place to learn, and to connect more deeply to God and all others."***

Peace,
Glenn Svetnicka, Executive Director,
glenn@ucci.org