

November 2021

BETHEL MESSENGER



Bethel UCC, W4225 County Line Road, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020
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Snow shovels are retrieved from their summer storage and snowblowers are made ready for use.

From the Pastor

Psalm 95:1-7a NIV

Come, let us sing for joy to the LORD; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song.

For the LORD is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him.

The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land.

Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the LORD our Maker; for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture, the flock under his care.

As November begins we are all busy preparing for the winter. Some of the crops that had been planted earlier than usual this year have been harvested some time ago. Door County had announced in July that the cherry crop was ready earlier than usual. Pies were made, cherries were canned or frozen. Apples have ripened in yards or orchards. Valeria Nohl would tell me how much she looked forward to making applesauce. It was a special family tradition.

November also brings another tradition: celebrating the National Thanksgiving Holiday. In Wisconsin Thanksgiving week is also Deer Hunting season and Friday is a day of Christmas Shopping. Some people use the extra time off to start decorating for Christmas.

As long as I can remember we gathered with my Mother's Family on Thanksgiving Day. Before we ate, we would gather, and Uncle Wally (Waldemar) would lead us in prayer. Each and every year we had so much for which we were thankful. Family, more than enough food, and the time to spend together.

November is a month of Good Memories. We start the month celebrating Totenfest Sunday. When our loved ones pass away, we are often feeling sorrow at their loss. Each holiday and family gathering are a reminder of how much we miss their presence. But as time goes on we begin to spend more time remembering the good times we shared. We become thankful for their life and their birth into eternal life.

The Psalmist encourages us to come before God with thanksgiving. November is a month with so many reasons to thank God. But I would encourage you to make every day a day to thank God. Sometimes we get busy or distracted and forget to thank God. Last month I mentioned that it seems when we haven't spoken to God in a while God calls out, "where are you?"

This November let's all try to make every day a day of Thanksgiving.

The New Normal

We hear "the new normal" over and over again. Covid 19 isn't the first thing that has brought the new normal to churches. As I think about it "the new normal" goes further and further back. God called Abram to Hebron, to

leave the land of his father, and to become Abraham- the “Father” of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. His new normal turned him from the worship of idols to a personal relationship with the one true living God. God called Moses to lead the Hebrew people out of slavery to a life of freedom in the land of Canaan. Even moving from slavery to freedom was not an easy change to make and God had the people wander in the wilderness for 40 years to prepare them for their new normal.

Sometimes we worry about the future of our churches. I often say “you can’t throw a stone without hitting a UCC church” in this area. It makes sense you know --- Lakeland University started as The Mission House training ministers in the “new world” rather than the Reformed church sending missionaries to serve the churches spreading across the country. The German immigrants were not just from the Reformed tradition. There were Catholics, Lutherans, German Congregationalists, and Evangelicals. If you come across a UCC church named St. John’s you most likely have come to a church of the Evangelical tradition. (a mandated merger of Lutheran and Reformed traditions that occurred in Germany)

On Sunday, October 10th, a member talked to me about the dwindling number of members in our local churches. It is not just a local phenomenon rather it is a nation-wide trend. Before membership started to decline in the United States the same thing happened in Europe. Great Cathedrals and massive churches see more tourists than worshipers. A great deal of time is spent considering what the new normal of the Christian church will be like? Perhaps this is a time we need to turn things over to God. We could worry and fret, plot and plan, or we could focus on being the body of Christ.

God has always seemed to be able to surprise human beings. In South America,

where Christianity had been introduced in the Catholic tradition, there is an explosion of Pentecostal and Evangelical churches. In Korea the Christian church is blossoming. For some churches and people the changes made to adapt to the new normal brought on by the Pandemic has been a boom to their membership. Members who have moved away or winter in the South were able to continue to “attend” worship online. Worship services uploaded to YouTube have been viewed by people around the world. Yes indeed, God is full of surprises.

I don’t have a crystal ball or prophetic powers, but I ask you to trust in God. Bethel UCC has already made the change to a part-time pastor. Other churches in our area have or will be making that same change. I feel so blessed to be with you because of the commitment and faith of this community. As any project or problem appears you have stepped up and come up with a solution. A true blessing.

We don’t know what our future holds. Not our own life or the life of the church. But know that God has not abandoned us. God has plans for us and for the world. Everything changes except for the love of God for God’s creatures and creation.

Totenfest

November 7th we will be remembering those that have passed to everlasting life in the last year. If you wish to remember a friend or family member by lighting a candle during worship please let Pastor Diane know by calling or texting 920-323-2156. Please leave your name if I need to contact you.

We will also celebrate Communion on the 7th.

Thanksgiving Service

The Ecumenical Pastors of Kiel and New Holstein will be holding a Thanksgiving Worship Service on Wednesday November 24th. Gloria Dei Church will be holding the service in their building. They are located off Highway 57 in New Holstein.

Bethel Family Members,

As part of our 160th anniversary celebration in 2022, we are planning to put together a memory/recipe book. We are asking our church family members of all ages to include memories you have from Bethel UCC (funny stories are welcome). If possible, please include a picture, which can be a snapshot or a drawing, and a recipe that may remind you of the story or recipes you would like to share with our church family. We will put the memories, pictures, and recipes together and have these memory/recipe books available during our anniversary celebration in **February 2022**. Memories may be from, and include recipes from, **Sunday School**, Ladies Aid, Youth Fellowship/Volleyball, Mission Fest, Chili Supper, Lenten Soup Suppers, etc. We are excited to hear from you! Forms and a container to collect your memories and recipes are on the table in the narthex. You may also send the information and pictures to a committee member via e-mail. Please return the forms by November 21, 2021.

If you have questions, please contact a committee member:

Mary Johnston - Phone number: 920-876-2564
Email: mbjohnston101@gmail.com

Patte Puetz - Phone number: 920-894-7366
Email: pattelpuetz@gmail.com

Jodi Voss - Phone number: 920-894-2731
Email: jlvoos@frontier.com

Janet Wesley - Phone number: 920-627-6362
Email: pjjdwesley@gmail.com

Hannah Ziegler - Phone number: 920-400-6673
Email: hziegsjazz18@gmail.com

Church Cancellation Protocol

When there is a threat of snowy/icy condition, the consistory president and pastor will check weather forecasts and other cancellations via various media (TV, radio, internet). They will call one another with this information. If the conditions are deemed unsafe and other churches in the area are also cancelling, they will make a decision by 6:30 am Sunday morning whether to cancel Christian education and worship. The consistory president will call the other consistory members to inform them of the decision. If church is cancelled it shall be posted on the church's website and Facebook. Churches' phone message on answering machine should be changed to reflect the cancellation. Consistory members will create a phone tree to contact families within the church. They will be assigned to call families from a portion of the alphabet (i.e., Last names begin with A-E; F-I; J-L; M-P; Q-S; T-Z). It is not necessary to contact members that are from out of the area.

A-E	Mary Johnston
F-I	Patte Puetz
J-L	Kim Rietbrock
M-P	Steve Blohm
Q-S	Rachel Voss
T-Z	Kris Dirks



Consistory Minutes

October 12th, 2021

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

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

Regular Meeting

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

The treasurer reports were reviewed for September. There was a motion (Kris/Patte) to approve all the treasurer reports. The motion carried unanimously.

Staff Review

- Tim Voss (Building & Grounds Committee) – Some concerns that were brought up were:
 - Bats in the bell tower – Lumber will be added & anchored to the floor and wall to prevent future bats from coming in.
 - The garage siding needs to be power washed & repainted, but rather than doing that every few years – he will be looking into getting an estimate on adding vinyl siding
 - General Maintenance – filters, outlets, touching up walls, repainting railing outside
 - Re-evaluate cement in front of churches entrance – lifting
 - Mold issues in Youth Fellowship room & Kitchen – (2) new dehumidifiers will be purchased to help eliminate the issues.
 - Roof is 20 years old – Committee will monitor condition for possible future repairs or replacement needs.

Pastor's Report:

- October 21st United church Men & Women Scholarship Banquet at Grace UCC in Two Rivers
- November 7th – Totenfest & Communion
- Advent starts November 28th.

Old Business:

- 1) Review of upcoming Schedule:
 - October 31st – Cary Knier Johannes will lead worship.
 - November 7th – Totenfest & Communion

- November 14th – Bonnie Ziegler will lead worship.
 - November 25th Thanksgiving
 - December 5th – First Communion & Bell Choir
 - December 19th – Sunday School Christmas Program at 10 am.
 - December 26th – No Church Service. (There was a motion with second - Kris/Patte - and all approved.)
 - 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) 160th Anniversary Committee – Members are asked to **PLEASE** submit recipes and memories from church to Mary, Jodi, Hannah or Janet.
 - 3) Mask policy will remain in force as well as social distancing – this is still being reviewed on a monthly basis by the consistory.
 - 4) Snow Removal Service – John Flesch will be contacted to provide snow removal service again.

New Business

- Budget Review – Review of 2021 budget and actual expenses; discussed 2022 budget.
- Nominating Committee – Publish notice of open Consistory & Committee positions.
- Committee Reports – due by December 31st and to be sent to Cindy Meyer.
- Church Cancellation Policy – Members will be contacted by email to provide cell phone numbers if they prefer a text message to inform of church cancellation.

There was a motion (Patte/Kris) to adjourn at 8:26pm. The motion carried unanimously. We ended with the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted, Rachel Voss