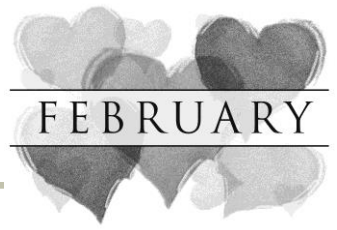


February 2024

# BETHEL MESSENGER

FEBRUARY

Bethel UCC, W4225 County Line Road, Elkhart Lake, WI 53020  
[www.bethelucc-ada.org](http://www.bethelucc-ada.org) (920) 565-2977



## From the Pastor

I am writing this after coming in from a bit of shoveling from snowstorm Bennett. We are waiting to decide if there will be a Worship Service held in the building or a Zoom service tomorrow. By now you all will know which way that turned out.

Last night as I waited for the final weather report on the Green Bay television station I read an article titled "Turning." Each day the author takes a walk around a lake. The path she travels is used by many dog walkers. She would normally just walk by them, saying "hello" and keep going. One day she turned around and went back to speak to a gentleman because when she said, "Good Morning" he smiled. She has learned his story and the story of the rescue dog that is his companion. She has even turned her fast paced walking practice into a walk that has allowed her to get to know other walkers and their dogs.

Think about "Turning Around." The Weather Channel often encourages us to "turn around and not drown" when an area receives a large amount of rain. They remind us that even a foot of water can hide a strong current that can carry a car away. Sometimes we push through and just keep moving. It can be a good thing, or it can be a tragic thing to keep going forward and not turning. We're taught to keep going, to push through it. To do whatever it takes to reach our goals.

In our Gospel readings we recently read about John the Baptist encouraging people to repent or turnaround from their old way of life. Instead of warning the people to avoid the currents in the river, he was calling them into the river to wash their old life away. In all our lives there are times we are called to make the decision to keep going or turn around.

After I had completed Lay Academy, Rev. Beth Petske called me and asked if I would take a class with her at United Theological Seminary. When we had finished Lay Academy I had been feeling, "Now what?" and I told her yes. I was still working full-time at Human Services and hadn't considered going into ministry. I guess you know how that turning my life around turned out.

Beth was not drawn to United and ended up driving back and forth to Chicago Theological Seminary with a group from this area. She had wonderful professors and wonderful conversations in the car as they drove back and forth together.

With that first class I was hooked. The drive to United took 5 ½ hours from my driveway to United's parking lot. Each week I would head out for class with God as my co-pilot. Cd's blasted Rev. Dr. Christopher Grundy's music and other Christian artist's music. The roads to New Brighton, Minnesota, gave me plenty of time to consider turning around. Some weeks I would leave a day early, or stay an extra day until the roads were cleared after a snow storm.

One time I even had the idea to take Highway 10 across the state because the weather report said the snow was going further north. The weather report was wrong and my decision to take Highway 10 was wrong. They may have improved the road since then, but at that time the road on the west side of the state was hilly, curvy, and not what you wanted in a snowstorm. (God being my co-pilot got me home safely.) Had I known what the road ahead was like I would have turned around.

Perhaps that is something to consider. We don't always know what the road ahead holds. Sometimes we may feel we have gone too far down the road to turn around. John's message to repent, to turn your life around, was heard by many people. Remember we read people were coming from all over the region of Judea and from Jerusalem. Shepherds, priests, farmers, merchants, old and

young, and even Jesus the Son of God, the Beloved, had come to be baptized by John.

We don't know how many of their lives went down another road after being baptized. We don't know if some encountered hardships because they chose another road, a path that went a different way than the Roman Empire or the ruling religious class would have them travel. We don't know how many encountered great joy and fulfillment. How many became followers of Jesus, how many sat at his feet and listened to him teach.

For the author of the article, Jennifer Ginn, turning around has opened new friendships and new opportunities in her life. For me changing the path I was on has radically changed my life. Sometimes we just need to double back around and say, "hello!"

As we tend to say to one another this time of year, "Stay Warm." Peace, Pastor Diane

## Spring Raffle Fundraiser 2024

I just put the License application for the Raffle in the mail so I guess it's that time again! If you haven't started thinking about prizes for this year's Raffle, **START THINKING, SHOP THE SALES, and GET READY!** I can feel it's going to be a record year!

Prize Donation Sheets will be out soon. I will want to know your donations for 2024 by **March 17**. If you can use scrip to purchase your prizes, you can help Bethel in **TWO** ways! Or if gift cards will be your prize, see Ken early to order!

I hope you are as excited as I am for another successful year!

Thank you all for your continued support of this fundraiser.

Any questions, call Carol Roethel 920-828-0009 (not a texting number).

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## SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

A new year has begun for Bethel **Sunday** school students. Teaching material has been organized for the two grade levels of classes.

The students Christmas program was well attended on **December 24<sup>th</sup>**. The older students did a wonderful job presenting the history of various **Christmas** songs, after which the congregation joined in song. Also a 'thank you' to the confirmation class for being a big part of our program with the younger children acting out the nativity scene. Thank you to the teachers, Karen, Crystal and Cary, and Jodi for accompanying the students on the piano. They do enjoy beating on their drums. The children also appreciated the donations for the candy bags and had a great time decorating them.

We will have a teacher's meeting, **Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup>** after the church service to plan our year's activities.

**Sunday** school superintendent, Mardell Blohm

## Spring Flowers

Easter Lily	\$10.55
Mum	\$10.55
Hydrangea	\$33.00
Azalea	\$24.00
Reiger Begonia	\$19.00

I will return from vacation on February 24 and orders due February 28.

Please leave your order on my home phone 565-5033 or my email. [trietbrock@tds.net](mailto:trietbrock@tds.net).

Thanks think spring  
Teri



## Consistory Minutes

January 9, 2024

Members Present ALL via Zoom: Kim Rietbrock, Rachel Voss, Randy Henschel, Jamie Weidemann, Dan Huber, Faye Spindler, Pastor Diane Cayemberg.

The meeting was called to order at 6:34 pm.

### Regular Meeting

The secretary minutes from December were reviewed. There was a motion (Dan/Randy) to approve the minutes. The motion carried unanimously.

The treasurer reports were reviewed for December. There was a motion (Faye/Dan) to approve all the treasurer reports. The motion carried unanimously.

### Pastor's Report:

- Pastor Diane will perform a wedding at St. John's on August 24th due to Rev. Melinda Feller's retirement.
- Wednesday night Confirmation Classes for first year students Emmerick and Julia will be ending prior to Lent. Weekly classes will resume in Fall when the new first year students will join the class and we cover the beginning chapters of the Confirmation book. Pastor Diane will be looking at other ways to keep them involved in the life of the church until next fall.

### Old Business:

- Review of Upcoming Schedule:
  - January 14th – Dana Dunton will lead worship.
  - January 28<sup>th</sup> – Annual Meeting
  - February 4<sup>th</sup> – Communion
  - February 11<sup>th</sup> – Pastor Diane will be off.
  - February 14<sup>th</sup> – Ash Wednesday Service – Lent Begins

- Reviewed Budget Updates and minor adjustments were made in wording. In addition, the group increased the salary for the janitor position to \$3,000 in 2024.
- Reviewed Agenda and Reports for the Annual Meeting with adjustments made for typographical errors.
  - Basement Refresh will be addressed at the Annual Meeting with confirmation by members if specific memorial money should be used in addition to the Fundraising Savings funds.
- After the annual meeting, a new list of committees and duties will be posted.

### New Business

- The power point committee learned that two new microphones are needed. Chuck Grubisic will be consulted about possible purchase of the microphones.

There was a motion (Dan/Faye) to adjourn at 7:36 pm. The motion carried unanimously. We ended with the Lord's prayer.

Respectfully Submitted, Rachel Voss



UCC RURAL CHURCH FELLOWSHIP  
Presents a  
**SHEEPSHEAD TOURNAMENT**

**Where:** Bethlehem United Church of Christ  
11608 Lax Chapel Road  
Kiel WI 53042

**When:** Sunday, February 18, 2024, from 1:00 pm to 3:00 pm  
Doors open at 12:30

**Entrance Fee:** Canned goods and/or free will offering

Rules will be explained before the tournament begins. All levels of skill are welcome. Beginner's table(s) will be available for those who don't know how to play. Don't want to play sheepshead but want to participate in the fun? Bring your own board or card game.

Refreshments will be available.  
Child care will be supplied. Games and movies for the kiddos.

**COME ONE...COME ALL!**

