



The Bethlehem STAR

Pride in Our Past - Faith in Our Future

July 2026

Join Us!

SUMMER SOCIAL

Sunday, July 12
4:00-7:00 PM



Benefits



Habitat
for Humanity®
of Evansville

Pastor's Perspective



On a birthday, it is customary for loved ones to give gifts to the celebrant. Sometimes, the celebrant even makes a list of things they'd like to receive. Then, it's up to loved ones to decide how much they can give and how that compares to the list provided. (When a child asks for their own trampoline park, the answer is no. But when she asks for a baby doll, it's easy to oblige!)

This month our country will celebrate its 250th birthday. I got to thinking, what could the Church give America for its birthday? What would America put on its birthday list? **And when we look at the list, can we afford to give the country what it's asking for?**

Can the Church afford what any government wants from it?

It's a question the Church has wrestled with in every age. Could Christians meet the expectations of Rome? Could they abide what Germany asked of them in the 1930s? What about America during slavery or South Africa during apartheid?

What is it that governments generally want, from all of their citizens?

A government, by definition, desires absolute allegiance. It may not always appear that way, particularly in times of low-stress, but when bombs and markets are falling or debts and floodwaters are rising, governments will always choose preservation of the country over all other considerations. That is what a government is designed to do.

But it is not what the Church is meant for.

The Church (which has continued without Rome for more than 1500 years, existed without America for more than 1700 years, and has outlasted the rise and fall of so many other nations!) has a different ultimate allegiance. **Through any and every crisis, the Church keeps its eyes fixed on the will of God made known to us through the prophets and through the life of**

Jesus Christ.

So, we cannot give our government what it would most like from its birthday list. But we can give it what it needs.

The Church has many off-list options that would benefit the celebrant: we can share the gospel message, tend to those who slip through the cracks of our society, and take our Christian morality and ethics into every field where we labor (from the laboratory to the fast food line to the court room to the coal mine). Each and every one of these would be a gift to our country!

But I ultimately settled on something else as the gift I would choose for America's 250th. The gift I think best suited for this moment from the Church to America is truth-telling. The best birthday gift the Church can give its host country is a commitment to *tell* the truth in all things and to *expect* truth telling in all things.

We can and should give these gifts consistently—no matter who is in office, no matter which party is in power, **no matter what “greater good” we might be tempted to believe could be accomplished with a little bit of deception.**

When truth is preserved and demanded, other “goods” naturally follow: injustice cannot stand, inequity cannot survive, and corruption cannot take hold. All of these will make America a better place for its citizens. And that is the purpose of a birthday gift, isn't it? For it to benefit the celebrant in a way that brings joy, meaning, and wholeness?

Happy birthday, America, from the Church. For our part, know that we commit to you to continue demanding and telling the truth. And in this way, we hope that God blesses you, through us.

Proverbs 12:19 — “Truthful lips endure forever, but a lying tongue lasts only a moment.”

A banner with a background of red, white, and blue ribbons. The text "Red, White, and Blueberry Brunch" is written in a bold, blue, sans-serif font with a white outline.

Red, White, and Blueberry Brunch

Everyone is invited to celebrate our nation's independence at the annual Red, White, and Blueberry Brunch on **Sunday, July 5, at 9:00 am!** Please join us in the Fellowship Hall for a time of food, fellowship, and song.

There will be breakfast casseroles, muffins, kuchen, and fruit to eat, along with juice, coffee, and milk to drink. If you have a patriotic food specialty that you would like to contribute, please bring it that morning. Please contact Debbie Havens dkhavens49@gmail.com with questions. Sponsored and prepared by the WEB group, this brunch is free to everyone.

See you there!!



Last month, the STAR included a piece about legacy giving at Bethlehem. This month, the Church Council offers you an opportunity to engage with one of these gifts in a way that continues the generosity!

Each year, the church receives a disbursement from the Voigt Trust that is at the discretion of the Church Council. For 2026, in light of the church's strong financial standing, the Council decided to give the entire amount away! And we want your help!

You can submit for consideration the cause or organization that is most meaningful to you. Forms to submit your idea will be available at the entrances to the church and should be returned to the church office by July 26.


Help us decide to whom we extend the generosity that has been extended to us!

Join Us for Our Annual

SUMMER SOCIAL



Let's beat the heat with great food and activities and good company while raising funds for Habitat for Humanity of Evansville!

- BBQ Dinner (w/sides & dessert) \$15
- kid meal with dessert \$7
- Delicious Homemade Ice Cream & Desserts 
- Car Show
- Live Entertainment
- HUGE Silent Auction
- Local Fire, EMS, & Police Vehicles



Sunday, July 12
4:00-7:00 PM



Bethlehem United Church of Christ
6400 Oak Hill Rd, Evansville



Car Show
Registration

Benefits  **Habitat**
for Humanity®
of Evansville



Summer Social Food Details and Silent Auction

The scrumptious adult meal includes barbecue pork and choice of two sides: baked beans, coleslaw, pasta salad, chips, drink and dessert. Kid's meal includes hot dog, choice of side, chips, drink, and dessert. Dessert choices are homemade cookies, cakes, pies, and, of course, delicious homemade ice cream. The price of a dinner this year will be \$12 in advance (\$15 at the door) and \$6 for kids. On **July 4 & 5** following worship, advance tickets will be available for purchase in the Welcoming Area. Cash or check accepted. Carryout meals will be available.

Be sure to bid generously for the Silent Auction. Auction closes at 6:45 pm. Below is a very small sample of more than 100 auction items!

Family

New York 3 day 2 night Package
2 Nights at Green Turtle Bay
Showplace Cinemas 10 passes

Adult

Bally's One Night Stay and Dinner
Terre Haute Casino One Night and Dinner
Planet Fitness Starter Pack Bag Towel and Locker Lock

Golf

Oak Meadow Evansville Golf foursome
Sultans Runs Jasper foursome
Quail Crossing Golf Boonville for 4 green fee and cart

Social Ice Cream and Dessert Makers

Sunday, July 12

Mark your calendar now for the annual Bethlehem Barbecue Dinner and Ice Cream Social! The Summer Social church-wide event raises thousands of dollars every year for the benefit of Habitat for Humanity.

We need ice cream and dessert makers. If you can bring homemade ice cream or baked goods, please use this form and place it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. For an electronic link to the form, please see upcoming Emily's Editions. Paper copies are also available at church entrances. Thank you!

I would like to donate the following items for the Ice Cream Social:

_____ Homemade Ice Cream (flavors other than vanilla are especially popular) ***Please use the provided ice cream containers on the cart outside of the kitchen and label with flavor name.**

_____ Cake

_____ Cupcakes

_____ Pie

_____ Cookies

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

PENNYRILE FOREST STATE PARK

CHURCH RETREAT



REGISTRATION OPEN NOW—JUNE 30TH SPACE LIMITED

JULY 31—AUGUST 2

Cottage and lodge rooms are available for reservation. Lodge rooms are offered in either two queen beds or one king bed configuration and are priced at \$150 per night, which includes breakfast.

One- and two-bedroom cottages are also available starting at \$200 per night. These cottages are located across the lake from the main lodge. Breakfast is included; however, please note that the cottages are a short drive or a longer walk from the main lodge, where all group activities and meal services will take place.

Festivities will begin Friday evening and conclude Sunday morning with an outdoor worship service.

To reserve your spot, please call 270-797-3421 and

reference group code 2709

Contact Margaret Eberhart for further info. 859-576-1442



An invitation from the Green Team

We invite you to join us for a video series, “Caring for the Earth: Stories from Faith Communities” from Blessed Tomorrow: Caring for Creation Today. We’ll watch these 20 minute films and discuss them beginning July 12 and running through August, taking breaks for the church retreat and Rally Day.

Classes and groups will catch up with one another at 9 AM. All are welcome to join us in the Welcoming Area at 9:15 to watch and discuss the films, finishing at 10:00, in time for more catching up before worship.

Topics in July are:



July 12: To Tend and Keep: People of Faith Caring for the Earth

July 19: Called By Faith: How Will You Answer?

July 26: Seeds of Fire: Building Resilient Communities

It’s been said that no matter what today’s headlines are, the climate is the issue. We look forward to seeing you.

UPDATES FROM OUTREACH



July 5

The next collection date for the Tri-State Food Bank will be Sunday, July 5. Please bring canned fruit (with pull-tabs, if possible) to worship and place them by the altar. 101 items were donated in June. Can we reach 111 in July? Thank you for your support of the Tri-State Food Bank!

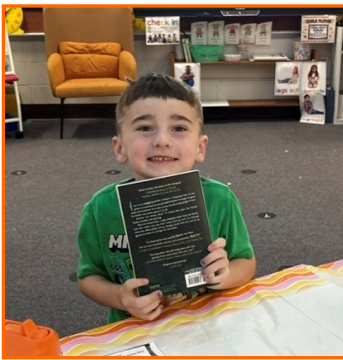
Outreach Giving

In 2025, the Outreach Committee was able to fulfill wishes of several EVSC schools through the EVSC Foundation. Teacher Erin Sizemore at Daniel Wertz teaches a unit every year on the book The One and Only Ivan and requested a classroom set, so that each child would get their own copy. She sent the following message and some photos:

"I wanted to share with you the pictures of my students receiving their "One and Only Ivan" books today. As always, it was a magical day and they are so happy to be coming home with their very own copy of Ivan. We cannot thank our donors enough!

Thank you for everything! I hope you have an amazing summer.

continued



The WEB ladies packed bags with care products for the YWCA Women's shelter, Ruth House, and Albion Fellows Bacon Center.



Tuesday Evening Bible Study

Join the evening Bible study at 6:30 pm anytime on the first and third Tuesdays of every month. See the schedule below listing the dates and scriptures covered. Please contact Pastor Doug with any questions.

| | | | |
|---------|---|-----------|---|
| July 7 | Isaiah 55:10-13 * Romans 8:1-11 Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23* | August 4 | Genesis 37:1-4, 12-28 Romans 10:5-15* Matthew 14:22-33* |
| July 21 | 1 Kings 3:5-12* Romans 8:26-39 Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52* | August 18 | Exodus 1:8-2:10* Romans 12:1-8 Matthew 16:13-20 |

*Denotes scripture covered by Pastor Emily for the upcoming weekend.

Altar Flowers



Donate Sunday morning altar flowers to celebrate a special occasion or remember a loved one. Prices are \$40 for two vases and/ or \$35 for one centerpiece. To view available dates and sign up, see our website bethlehemucc.org. Paper forms are always available in the vestibule (office entrance open 24/7), church office hallway, Welcoming Area, children and youth entrance, and narthex.

Upcoming available dates: July 12, 19, 25 & August 2, 9, 23, 30

If you have any altar flower questions, please contact Carol Kolb or carolrkolb@yahoo.com.



Bethlehem United Church of Christ
**ANNUAL METAL
 RECYCLING DRIVE**



August 15, 8:30 - 11:30 AM

**Any metal item is welcome
 except those containing Freon and TVs.**

Financial Recap

May General Account

| | <u>2026</u> | <u>2025</u> |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Monthly Beginning Balance | \$ 156,603.65 | \$ 140,595.48 |
| Monthly Pledge Deposits | 32,730.49 | 25,321.52 |
| Monthly Other Deposits | 1,462.82 | 2,217.08 |
| Monthly Operating Disbursements | (33,707.95) | (35,221.14) |
| Monthly Other Disbursements | 26,920.39 | - |
| Monthly Ending Balance | <u>\$ 184,009.40</u> | <u>\$ 132,912.94</u> |

YTD General Account

| | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$ 168,584.96 | \$ 170,535.44 |
| Pledge Deposits | 185,773.20 | 176,178.91 |
| Other Deposits | 12,473.72 | 8,626.63 |
| Operating Disbursements | (214,335.50) | (223,026.06) |
| Other Disbursements | 31,513.02 | 598.02 |
| Ending Balance | <u>\$ 184,009.40</u> | <u>\$ 132,912.94</u> |





Look for more pictures on our social media pages and in the August STAR!

*In
Loving
Memory*

Margaret "Ann" Stahl, 85, of Evansville, Indiana, passed away on Saturday, June 20, 2026, at her home.



Ann was born in Evansville, Indiana, on August 11, 1940. She was a 1958 graduate of Bosse High School and earned her B.S. in Nursing from Vanderbilt University in 1962.

Ann was a longtime member of Bethlehem United Church of Christ, where she was involved with the EOSIN Fellowship Group. She enjoyed traveling to Cortland, New York to attend National Brockway Truck Shows, reading books, spending time with friends, and going out for Sunday breakfast at Bob Evans. Above all, Ann loved her family and cherished the time she spent with them. She will be deeply missed by all who knew and loved her.

Ann is survived by her loving husband of 61 years, Quentin Stahl of Evansville, IN; sons, Dirck Stahl of Evansville, IN, and Brock Stahl (Amy) of Chandler, IN; grandchildren, Brightin Stahl, Jade Tibbs, Grant Cornelision, and Chase Cornelision.

Ann was preceded in death by her mother, Gertrude (Schergens) Carmack.

A celebration of Ann's life was held at 11:00 am on Tuesday, June 30, 2026, at Bethlehem United Church of Christ, 6400 Oak Hill Rd., Evansville, IN 47725. Those attending were invited to a luncheon at the church immediately following the service.

Memorial contributions may be made to Bethlehem United Church of Christ.

The family would like to thank Jada, Hope, Nancy, Thelma, and "Hot Rod-17" for all the love and support they gave to Ann.



The Michael P. Schmitt and Lorena K. Schmitt Music Scholarships

The Michael P. Schmitt and Lorena K. Schmitt Music Scholarships will be awarded for the year 2026.

Qualifications:

- Applicant must be a member or regularly attend Bethlehem United Church of Christ.
- Applicant must show an interest and aptitude for instrumental or vocal music.
- Applicant must be willing to share his/her talent with the church when requested.

Applications are available outside the church office. Please contact the church office if you have any questions.

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

(812) 867-2497

church@bethlehemucc.org

Deadline for submitting applications is August 31, 2026.

Please send application to:

ATTN: MEMORIAL COMMITTEE

Bethlehem United Church of Christ

6400 Oak Hill Road, Evansville, IN 47725

Calling the Curious and Others!



Curious about Back Bay Mission and the adult mission trips? Want to know more about the projects or where you will stay? Or how you might help when you get there?

Back Bay Mission is located in Biloxi, Mississippi and has been operating as a UCC mission for over 100 years. It currently serves hundreds of unhoused individuals weekly with showers, meals and other support, but also hosts a food pantry, health outreach services, and coordinates multiple housing rehabilitation projects for local homeowners who lack the means to complete these projects. The majority of these services are provided by VOLUNTEER GROUPS who volunteer, one week at a time, to assist in many capacities including carpentry, home projects and painting, but also cooking, office and food pantry help. There is - literally - a place for everyone to serve.

This year's trip, sponsored by the Evansville Tri-State Association, is scheduled for Saturday, October 31 - Saturday, November 7.

Come learn more and begin the sign-up process at the information meeting.



Sunday, August 16 at 1:00 pm
Bethlehem United Church of Christ - Welcoming Area
6400 Oak Hill Road (Please use the north entrance.)

Need more information? Please contact Lee Ann Shafer at lashafer75@gmail.com.

Exciting Updates from Good Samaritan

Affordable Housing Grants Awarded

In May, Good Samaritan Home celebrated the recipients of our first Affordable Housing Grant Cycle, awarding a total of **\$542,600** to six nonprofit organizations working to address critical housing needs across our region.

The grants will support the construction, rehabilitation, and preservation of affordable housing, as well as programs and services that help tenants and homeowners succeed.

Recipients included:

- Community One
- ECHO Housing
- HOPE of Evansville
- Memorial Community Development Corporation
- United Caring Services

Together, these projects will create or improve dozens of affordable housing opportunities while strengthening neighborhoods and expanding access to safe, stable, quality homes.

The next Affordable Housing Grant Cycle will open on July 1, 2026.

Expanding Mental Health Access Through Partnership with USI

Another exciting initiative continues to move forward through our partnership with the University of Southern Indiana. *continued*



The Good Samaritan Rural & Underserved Outreach Collaborative is preparing to launch a network of walk-in mental health outreach clinics serving communities that often face barriers to accessing care.

Seven outreach sites have now been identified across the region, including locations in Dubois, Martin, Perry, Pike, Posey, and Vanderburgh counties. These sites include churches, libraries, and community organizations that are opening their doors to help meet critical mental health needs.

Interest from students has been strong. Sixteen Master of Social Work students applied for the first cohort, and ten were selected. An orientation is scheduled for August. These students will receive practical experience while helping bring mental health support directly into communities where services are often limited.

Through this partnership, we are not only expanding access to mental health services today. We are also helping prepare the next generation of social workers who will serve our region for years to come.

Looking ahead

The walls changed.

The mission did not.

Our Mission: to create a caring community through an atmosphere of Christian love and concern.

Thank you for your continued support, your partnership, and your belief that compassion still has the power to transform lives.

Together, we look forward to continuing the work.

Dear Rev. Slade,

Thank you for the very generous contribution to St. Vincent de Paul. Your donation of \$5,000 strengthens the very foundation our mission and ensures that we can continue serving our neighbors with dignity, compassion, and hope.



The Evansville District Council encompasses 18 conferences servicing families throughout Vanderburgh, Warrick, Posey, and Gibson Counties. Your contribution was evenly distributed among the All Saints, Annunciation, Sts. Mary & John, Good Shepherd, and Corpus Christi conferences. Each conference responds directly to the needs of its local community: offering essential assistance with housing, utilities, transportation, clothing, and other necessities. Your gift empowers Vincentians to act swiftly and effectively when a neighbor calls for help.

Your generosity ensures that these ministries, and the thousands of families they impact each year, remain strong, sustainable, and ready to respond to emerging needs.

Thank you for choosing to invest in our community and for placing your trust in the mission of St. Vincent de Paul. Together, we are providing hope, stability, and compassion to our neighbors when they need it most.

With sincere gratitude,

Ashley V.X. Newell, Executive Director
District of Evansville, Society of St. Vincent de Paul



BETHLEHEM
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
6400 Oak Hill Road
Evansville, IN 47725

Please contact the church office if you are aware of any address changes.

(812) 867-2497 (Office)

email: church@bethlehemucc.org

website: bethlehemucc.org

Follow us on Facebook,
Instagram, and Twitter

Office Hours

Monday 12:00 - 3:00 PM

**Tuesday - Thursday
10:00 AM to 3:00 PM**

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

***Striving to welcome all who seek God; to grow in faith;
and to love neighbor as self through action.***