The Bethlehem STAR
Pride in Our Past - Faith in Our Future
August 2020

Our Community Needs Us
Here's Our Chance

Please respond by August 10
Page 9
If I’ve said it once, I’ve said it a hundred times, “This is just a season of no good options.” We make plans and contingency plans, but then we get closer to the day to implement those plans, and even our contingency plans don’t suit the circumstances. All of the options before us have trade-offs. If we zig, there are potential negative consequences. If we zag, there are other potential negative consequences. What do we do when the only options we have are bad ones?

Some might say I need to adjust my attitude, and I do try to do that. I try to see the beauty and the joy in even these absurd circumstances we’re living in. But, I do wonder if there’s more that we can do than simply “look on the bright side” of things.

A theme we see in Scripture over and over again is that the Divine Imagination is always greater than what God’s people expect. God is always way out in front of the people, planning new realities they can’t even imagine.

Enslaved Israelites drifting to sleep one unremarkable night in Egypt could not have imagined that in the morning Moses would return with orders from a burning bush to confront Pharaoh and ultimately lead them to liberation.
Ruth could not have imagined that her night on the threshing floor would lead to her being the great-grandmother of the greatest king in Israel’s history (long before Israel had even dreamt of becoming a monarchy).
Saul could not have imagined that his angry trek to Damascus would reverse his life’s course, so that he would become the first missionary of the church.

Maybe this isn’t a season of “no good options.” Maybe it is a season that is exposing the limited nature of our collective imagination. How might we tap
into the scope—both deep and wide!—of the Divine Imagination during this season?

Maybe the question for this moment is not “How can we look on the bright side?” but rather, “Is there a third way we aren’t considering, because it stretches past the limits of our imaginations?”

“No to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.“ (Ephesians 3:20-21)

~ Pastor Emily

Pastor Emily will be taking vacation time July 31-August 6. If you need pastoral care during that time, please contact the office and they will get in touch with Rev. Dave Marshall. Because of the timing of how we pre-record worship, Emily will still be leading worship on August 2, and Rev. Dave will be leading worship on August 9.

iPad Ministry

Are you unable to tune in to our virtual worship services? We have volunteers who are dropping iPads off on porches each week with the Sunday service loaded onto them. You can watch with just the press of a button! We’d love to include you on our route! Please call the office if you’d like an iPad, or to receive a paper copy of the sermon and prayer list each week. 812-867-2497
What a challenging year 2020 has been for us at Bethlehem. Many of us had never heard of a Virtual worship service, a Zoom meeting, or a Prayer Pod. We definitely had not experienced wearing masks while out in public. Some have said to me that this should be an easy year to be the church council president. When you get to work with such talented and dedicated people as our Senior Pastor, Staff, Council, Committees, Volunteers, and other church family members, EVERY year is a good year.

One of our new challenges at this time of year is how we can hold a semi-annual congregational meeting. As a Council we voted to move the meeting to August 30th with the hope that we could return to worship by that date. As we all know, that will not happen. Fortunately, the semi-annual congregational meeting is more of a six-month status meeting with little required voting.

During the week of August 10th you will receive a letter that will describe the process for the semi-annual meeting. The letter will outline the meeting agenda, inform you about how you will receive reports/documents for review, and explain the method for sharing questions or concerns about those reports/documents.

We may not always agree on exactly how and when to do things, but I genuinely believe we have the same goals in mind. I would much rather be sitting in church next to you or across the table from you, discussing your ideas on how we meet those goals. Thank you for your continued understanding during this time, and I look forward to the day we can sit together and share our stories.

Dave Hunt
Church Council President
Sunday School Kick-Off 2020

Considering the current circumstances, we will celebrate the start of Sunday School by rolling out our Sunday School Kick-Off on Sunday, September 13th. We want to give everyone a chance to settle in, and adjust to the new school year. Stay tuned for Sunday School opportunities for all ages.

Please register for your children’s Sunday School take-home curriculum starting August 1st (bethlehemucc.org), so we can order the right amount of materials for everyone!

Dear Youth Families,

The Youth Group is responsible for serving at UCS on Sunday, August 23rd and Sunday, November 22nd. In light of current events, we will not be preparing dinner or serving at the Shelter, but will continue to support the shelter’s needs by preparing dinner in our homes and transporting it to UCS. We will need lots of help to continue to support this need. Keep an eye out for an email to sign up for a task. If you volunteer and need community hours for educational requirements, I am happy to sign off.

-Elizabeth
Virtual Vacation Bible School
Bethlehem has agreed to be a “Depot” to collect all the cleaning buckets, and hygiene and school supply kits from the Blitzes that area churches have held and will hold this year. Those churches will bring their buckets to Bethlehem from September 28th to October 16th, and we will transport them to 2nd Presbyterian in Indianapolis shortly afterward.

We need volunteers to be “on call” for a day or two during that time frame. Churches will call to schedule a drop off, and if they need to drop off on the day you are on call, you will be notified to meet them at the church and help them unload buckets in the Burgoo building. You may or may not be called, but need to be available on the day you are scheduled.

If you can volunteer, email Andrea Gander (agoose123@aol.com) to let her know when you are available and a phone number where you can be reached. She will call you to confirm the date and go over instructions on getting a key. We request that everyone making a drop off and Bethlehem members to wear masks to minimize risk while continuing to BE THE CHURCH!
United Caring Services
COVID Information Update

For years, Bethlehem has provided dinner on the fourth Sunday of the month at UCS. During this time of heightened health concerns, many groups have opted to prepare meals at home (or ordered carryout items) and bring them to the shelter at dinner time, rather than prepare them at the shelter. If your group is one that serves, please consider this as an option. Be sure to communicate with the shelter about your plans. If, for some reason, your group is not going to be able to provide a meal for your scheduled slot, please let the office know at the beginning of the month, so we can find another way to provide this meal to the shelter. Here is the schedule for the next four months.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>Motley Crew</td>
<td>Couples Small Group</td>
<td>Youth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Flowers for the Altar

You might like to celebrate a special occasion, honor a special person, or maybe you just enjoy seeing live flowers on the altar! Dates are first-come, first-serve, so reserve early! Below is a list of dates currently available. To reserve a weekend, email (judy@bethlehemucc.org).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>August</th>
<th>September</th>
<th>October</th>
<th>November</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2, 9, 16, &amp; 23</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4 &amp; 11</td>
<td>8, 15 &amp; 29</td>
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</table>
We want to celebrate some of the ways our church is helping alleviate some of the needs in our community!

First, this month the Outreach Committee offered $2100 worth of matching funds for the bathroom renovation project at United Caring Services. At the time of publication, we have surpassed the goal with $2,260 given by individuals from our church family. When we pair that with the $2,100 of Outreach funds, that means Bethlehem has given $4,360 to the bathroom renovation project!

The Outreach portion of the matching funds originated from a series of gifts Bethlehem made from the request that a certain portion of the Ray Heseman Estate be given to benevolence. Beyond the $2,100 given to UCS, this estate gift provided an additional $6,550 distributed to these organizations: COVID 19 Crisis Response Fund of the Greater Evansville Region, Tri-State Food Bank, CAJE, Jack Henry Gates Laundromat, St. Paul’s UCC meals ministries, and Back Bay Mission.

But wait, there’s more!

Each year the Church Council is charged with deciding how to use the interest from the Voigt Trust. In the past there have been times this interest had to be used to meet the budget. There are times it has gone to the Contingency Fund. At the July Council meeting, the Council decided that because of the consistency in our tithes and offerings through this crisis, and because of our strong financial standing, we are in a position to share all of these funds with areas of need in our community as we now have roughly $26,000 to give away! (cont.)
The Bethlehem STAR

The Council voted that 20% of the funds will be distributed to CAJE and Habitat for Humanity. The Council is asking the congregation to help them decide where the remaining 80% goes. Please reach out to Dave Hunt (djhunt1976@aol.com) with names of local organizations you think could use some help during this difficult season. Submit your ideas by August 10 so that the Council can decide how to use the remaining funds to help be good neighbors and a light for our community!

And join me in prayers of thanksgiving that we are able to share out of our abundance! Spend a few moments reflecting on the writings of Paul to the church in Corinth as he tries to urge them to greater generosity:

“I do not mean that there should be relief for others and pressure on you, but it is a question of a fair balance between your present abundance and their need, so that their abundance may be for your need, in order that there may be a fair balance. As it is written,

“The one who had much did not have too much, and the one who had little did not have too little.” --2 Corinthians 8:13-15

Update on In-Person Worship

The Church Council has once again made the difficult decision to continue worshipping only virtually through the month of August. We plan to spend the next several weeks exploring options for having worship in the parking lot after Labor Day. We know that we are all growing weary of this time apart, but we continue to discern through complicated and competing concerns that the best thing to do right now is to continue to watch and wait. Most importantly, we continue to trust that the God who sustained the Israelites in the wilderness will provide the manna we need to make it through each of these challenging days.
Thank You for Using the App

We are excited to see a continued increase in the number of new users of the GivePlus app. Thank you to everyone who has embraced this online giving option, and hope you are enjoying the ease in which you can now make your offerings. We look forward to seeing even more giving done electronically!

If you would like to make an offering, one quick and easy way to give is through the GivePlus app, which is downloadable through the App store or Google Play. Did you know that electronic giving through the app significantly reduces the handling and accounting time associated with paper money and check giving? While it makes end-of-the-year statements a breeze, you can also view your cumulative giving at any point throughout the year. If you haven’t already done so, please download and try using the GivePlus app today!

**Please note:** Moving forward, please do not give as a “guest” unless you are truly making a one-time donation. If you are going to give in the future, please create an account, and try to use this same account for all donations coming from your household. Thank you again for your continued support of Bethlehem!
The Outreach Team was given the honor to designate organizations to receive 10% of The Ray Heseman Memorial. We had a Zoom meeting with Pastor Emily and Council President Dave Hunt, and have picked these organizations, keeping the majority in the community.

Checks for the following amount have been sent to:

$2164.40 - United Caring Shelter for the bathroom update project
$2164.40 - COVID 19 Crisis Response Fund of the Greater Evansville Region
$1082.10 - Tri-State Food Bank
$811.65 - CAJE – Congregations Acting for Justice and Empowerment
$811.65 - Jack Henry Gates Memorial Laundry
$811.65 - St. Paul’s UCC Michigan Street Youth to help with food cost for their soup kitchen and for serving at UCS
$811.65 - Back Bay Mission

Thank you for your continued support of Bethlehem’s Outreach Ministry.
Evansville - Jerry L Minto, 79, passed away on Thursday, July 2, 2020 in Evansville, IN. He was born in Cannelton, IN on May 17, 1941 to William John and Mabel May (Rausch) Minto.

He graduated Cannelton High School 1959 and University of Evansville 1975. He was a Morse intercept operator in the United States Air Force 1959-1963. Jerry was employed as an accountant at Mel-Kay Electric 1971-2020. He was a member of Bethlehem UCC Church and former member of St. John UCC. He also was a member of the Evansville Civitan Club and was a devoted fan of the Cardinals and UE Athletics. Jerry belonged to the Rockport Masonic Lodge 112, where he had been Past Master, Thrice Potentate Master of the Scottish Rite where he was a 33rd degree Mason, Past Masters Club and the Hadi Shrine Drum and Bugle Corp.

Jerry was preceded in death by his parents; brother, Joe; and sister, June.

He is survived by his wife of 25 years, Lois (Sakel) Minto; daughter, Lee Ann (Minto) Kirby (Paul); son, Jeff Minto; step-daughter, Jane Conway (Chris); step-son, Brian Conway (Grace); grandchildren, Daniel Kirby, Brandon Kirby, Ryan Kirby, Drew Minto, Rowan Conway, and Eleanor Conway.

A funeral service was held 11:00 a.m. Wednesday, July 08, 2020 at Bethlehem UCC, 6400 Oak Hill Road, officiated by Rev. Emily Slade, with burial in Locust Hill Cemetery. Friends visited Tuesday from 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Alexander North Chapel, 4200 Stringtown Road, where there was a Shriner walk through at 6:00 p.m, 33rd Degree Mason Walk through at 6:15 p.m., and a Mason Memorial Service at 6:30 p.m. and a visitation Wednesday from 10:00 a.m. till service time at the church.

Contributions may be made to the Shriner's Hospital.
We are going to do a “Virtual Blessing of the Backpacks/Work Spaces” on August 16. We know this school year will be very different for our children and the teachers and staff who care for them. We want to pray a special prayer over all of them as they head back to school or begin schooling from home. Please send a picture of your child wearing their backpack and/or sitting in their home workspace for us to use in a slideshow as part of our blessing on August 16. Pictures can be sent to Troy by August 9 at (troy@bethlehemucc.org). If you have any questions Miss Elizabeth (elizabeth@bethlehemucc.org).

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**Financial Recap**

**JUNE General Account**

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Beginning Balance</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Pledge Deposits</td>
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<td>Monthly Other Deposits</td>
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<td>Monthly Operating Disbursements</td>
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<td>Monthly Other Disbursements</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monthly Ending Balance</td>
<td>$235,774.39</td>
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**YTD General Account**

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<th>Description</th>
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<td>Operating Disbursements</td>
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<td>Other Disbursements</td>
<td>26,137.19</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ending Balance</td>
<td>$235,774.39</td>
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</table>
Dear Bethlehem UCC,

On behalf of The Good Samaritan Home, we would like to thank you for your 3rd Quarter Donation of $987.75 in July of 2020. Your financial support helps us to continue our mission to assist our residents and their families.

The generous support from individuals and organizations like yours makes it possible for our organization to exist, and makes our home a great place to live and visit. Thank you again for your support and have a blessed day.

Sincerely,
Paula Kuhn, The Good Samaritan Home

Dear Bethlehem United Church of Christ,

On behalf of our entire team at Tri-State Food Bank, we wish to express our sincere appreciation for your $1,082.19 gift.

Over the course of a year, Tri-State Food Bank supplies food to over 250 hunger relief programs throughout our 33-county service area. Approximately 7,000,000 meals are provided through our network of pantries, soup kitchens, senior meal programs, Kids Cafe, and Weekend BackPack Food for Kids program. And it is through the tireless efforts of our friends - their ongoing financial support, and thousands of volunteer hours - that we are able to make a real difference here in the Tri-State.

Thank you for playing such a vital role in our mission to end hunger in our community, especially at this time of crisis with the Coronavirus pandemic.

Sincerely,
Glenn Roberts, Executive Director-Brooke Schleter, Development Director
Dear Friends at Bethlehem UCC,

On behalf of all of us here at Weekend Christian Education, we'd like to sincerely thank you for your recent donation. Your faithful support is such a blessing, and is so very much appreciated, especially in the midst of all the turmoil and uncertainty that seems to be surrounding all of us at this time. Because you have chosen to be the hands and feet of Christ, your generous gift of $920.00 will help ensure that countless 3rd and 4th grade children, right here in the Evansville community, are able to read from God’s word and will learn of God's immeasurable love for each of them. In the current state our country and communities are in, we at Weekday believe even more strongly in the urgent need for God-filled ministries that promote His work and the love of Jesus Christ. While COVID-19 crises may change what our program looks like in our schools this year, planting the seeds of faith, and strong Christian values, in the hearts of children in our community is still as important as ever. We want to assure you that Weekday Christian Education will continue to do all we can to meet the spiritual needs of these children. Thank you for all you’re doing to make this possible. But Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 19:14

Sincerest blessings to you,
Daphne Owen, Development Specialist

Dear Bethlehem UCC,

Thank you for your recent generous gift of $811.65 to Back Bay Mission! Your gift makes it possible to ensure help for the low-income and homeless people that are being seriously impacted by this pandemic.
As we move through this pandemic to a place of relative stability, the needs of the people we serve will be deeper. Many will not be able to return to their old jobs due to the loss of businesses and we will be assisting many new clients looking for restorative resources to resume their lives. As demonstrated after Hurricane Katrina and the Deep Water Horizon Oil Disaster this is a resilient community that will need support to find new pathways to sustainability. So, with your help, we can be there for people struggling to keep a roof over their heads, food on the table, the utilities on. Homeless residents will continue needing basic necessities such as showering, having clean clothes, respite space as well as access to case management.

The vast majority of the people we serve do not want to live in poverty and they don't want a handout. They want the chance to move forward. And your gift provides that chance.

Thank you for your generous gift!

Rev. Alice Graham, Ph.D.
Executive Director

On August 1, Addisson Grimm will join the Bethlehem staff family as our Chancel and Bell Choirs Director. Be on the lookout in the September STAR as we introduce and welcome him, and learn why he is a such special fit for our congregation.
Evansville has had exciting creation care developments. The city announced that a **Climate Action Plan (CAP)** will be developed, led by Mayor Winnecke with the support of IU Resilience program. Evansville and other cities around the country are developing CAPs to protect our community from the effects of climate change. The goal: to identify actions to significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Evansville region. For more information, visit the CAP website at [www.climateevansville.com](http://www.climateevansville.com).

The other important news is that Vectren announced its intention to rebuild itself around renewable energy. Vectren plans to shift nearly two-thirds of their electrical generation toward wind, solar and battery storage by 2025. That is a totally different world than three years ago when the previous plan was gas, coal, and very little renewables. There is still significant progress to be made, but this is definitely good news for Evansville and the Earth. Thank you to all who helped send the message these past two years that Evansville wanted a more Earth-friendly future.

We have to give credit where it’s due. Our very own Green Team member, Jay Picking, who was very active in getting changes in the Vectren plan mentioned above, spent many hours working on the plan and in meetings with Vectren using his knowledge and willingness to make a difference! Jay, here is a great quote that fits you very well.

> “IF NOT YOU, THEN WHO?  IF NOT NOW, THEN WHEN?”
> ~ Rabbi Hillel (sometime in the first century)

Thank you, Jay!

Check out these web sites: cclcommunity@citizensclimate.org
Climate Action Plan (CAP) [www.climateevansville.com](http://www.climateevansville.com) (also on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
August Birthdays

1st  Ali Mattingly  Brooke French  Steven Feagley
4th  Brock Stahl  Janet Krietenstein  Sally Vogl-Bauer
5th  Curt Hahn  Brandon Hirsch  Savanna Hirsch  Jordan French
       Carolyn Mason  Brandi Kuhlenschmidt
10th  Marty Meddles  Caleb Slade  Karli Hape
       Malikhi Dillon  Ethan Vaupel  Emery Mattingly
       Pearce Eberhart
11th  Ann Stahl (80)  Ben Schultheis  Brooks Carroll
       Pam Hirsch  Grant Wiseman  Donna Black
12th  Norma Hartz (85)  Caleb Slade  Nick Dus
       Pam Rardin  Ethan Vaupel
       Kyler Fairchild
13th  Pam Rardin  Jeni Schmitt  Makenzie Markwell
       Kyler Fairchild  Courtney Traylor
14th  Jini Svestka (89)  Tresa Miller  Let’s fill the mailboxes of our Special Seniors on their birthdays.
       Lois Minto (88)  Grant Fromme
       George Delano  Sheri Schenk
       Scott Bosecker  Courtney Traylor
15th  Jacob Crockett  Sheri Schenk
       Savannah Hirsch
16th  Joe Kirby (84)  Jeni Schmitt  Linda Luker
       Brandi Kuhlenschmidt
17th  Ben Schultheis  Gave Hirsch
       Caleb Slade
18th  Tresa Miller  Amy Spurling
       Savannah Hirsch
19th  Jini Svestka (89)  Amy Spurling

August Anniversaries

1st  Denis & Pam Hirsch  Conley & Janet Krietenstein
2nd  Gale & Marlys Blalock  Brent & Tracey Stevens
6th  Chris & Kristen Head  Lino & Pam Wiseman (55)
7th  Ken & Jean Karmire  Walt & Jane Koch
     Bart & Brenda McCandless (50)
12th  Andy & Mary Beth Ozete  Curt & Marcy Hahn
13th  Rick & Gerri Klass  Lonny & Pam Dus
14th  Kurt & Chanca Stahl  Larry & Cherie Bourland (50)
16th  Brad & Kim Johann
Please contact the church office if you are aware of any address changes.

OUR VISION STATEMENT:

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