



The LINK is a monthly publication LINKing together the people of Bethel United Church of Christ

BENEVOLENCE—SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING

CUE—Seminaries of the United Church of Christ

CHICAGO UNITED EDEN

CUE is a collaborative fundraising organization that actively encourages and facilitates congregational support for the UCC's three midwestern seminaries: Chicago, United and Eden. CUE operates as an independent 501(c)3 outside of the United Church of Christ. They raise hundreds of thousands of dollars for seminary education each year on behalf of the seminaries, distributing funds equally among them and supplementing their ability to raise funds directly.

communicates the importance of seminary education to the congregations and communities who benefit from the trained leadership the seminaries provide. Theological education is at the very foundation of vital churches Our faith is a living tradition that calls for continual discovery and re-discovery and demands that we equip leaders to interpret the tradition for our own time and place. Never has this call been more important than in these days of change and complexity. Chicago, United, and Eden Seminaries are dedicated to the work of strengthening churches by educating leaders who will serve congregations and communities around the world with compassion and justice.

Collaboration makes CUE stronger, extends their reach, and demonstrates their shared commitment to theological education on behalf of the United Church of Christ. UCC seminaries transform lives and faith communities. Speaking with one voice, CUE com-

Northland Shepherds Center

Northland Shepherd's Center is a non-profit agency with 501(C)(3) designation celebrating 29 years of providing meaning and purpose for adults (60-plus) in Clay and Platte counties. They are funded through grants, individual, and business donations, 60 supporting faith-based organizations, United Way, & fund raising events. They also have an Endowment Fund which gives them financial stability for long

term operations and expansion. Their office acts as a clearing house to unite older adults to services and agencies. The mission is to improve the quality of life for adults (60-plus) helping them thrive in the community and remain in their homes.



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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Scout Sunday—Feb. 4**
- **Souper Bowl of Caring—Feb. 11**
- **Ash Wednesday—Feb. 14**
- **Lenten Services—Feb. 21, 28. Mar. 6, Mar. 13, Mar. 20**



TACKLE HUNGER

Souper Bowl of Caring—February 11

In 1990, Souper Bowl of Caring began with a simple prayer from a single youth group: *"Lord, even as we enjoy the Super Bowl football game, help us be mindful of those without a bowl of soup to eat."* Since

then, more than \$170 million has been generated for local charities across the country

through Souper Bowl of Caring.

This year, your donations will go to three great causes. We will be using a portion of the donations collected to pay off the lunch debit for students at Eastgate 6th Grade Center, Chouteau Helping Hands Fund and also donating to Backpack Shepherds to assist with food for students and their families during the week.

Share in God's love for our neighbors in need and give generously on Soup Bowl Sunday.

See page 4 for more information on the special fundraiser.

BACKPACK SHEPHERDS FEBRUARY NEEDS

- Fruit cups & pudding 4 packs
- Microwave popcorn
- Pancake mix
- Canned chili, stew
- Chicken 10 or 12 oz can
- Snack Cakes (Little Debbie type)
- Fruit Drinks (Juicy Fruit small cartons)
- Snack crackers or chips

Pat Armstrong, Bethel Rep.



SWEET GARDEN OF PRAYER



I have talked about this year being Bethel's Dreaming Year, saying we are on a journey. A conversation with fellow clergy this week made me realize that "journey" is not the right word. A journey may not have a destination.

What we here at Bethel are on is a Pilgrimage. A pilgrimage has a destination (with specific points along the way) and a purpose. A journey is often in itself the purpose—to wander and explore. Exploration is certainly a part of Bethel's pilgrimage this year, but this is not aimless wandering.

What sets a church apart from clubs? Both center on relationships and community. The difference is where that centering comes from—for a country club it may be status or golf or tennis, for a civic organization it may be a specific charity or cause, etc.

For a religion, the focus must be on God as understood by that particular practice. For the Christian Church, the centering must be on the teachings of Jesus. Jesus' teachings direct us to God. The latest Pew Research shows that "nones" (religiously unaffiliated) people make up the largest group in the United States. Yet, research also shows that people in the U.S., especially young adults and teens, seek spiritual connection. This should be what sets church apart from clubs—spiritual connection. This is what makes the difference between a journey and a pilgrimage. A pilgrimage's purpose is spiritual connection. The destination is deeper connection with and through the Creator.

I've laid out the stops along the way for our Dreaming Pilgrimage—the four retreats; the listening sessions; in-gathering of hopes and dreams; Celebratory Retreat; and next steps. Each of these is a stop along our Pilgrimage, a destination in itself, but not the final destination. The final destination is that Deeper Spiritual Connection with each other and God that will fortify us for our future.

Consider this: We are co-creators with God. God provides us with building blocks. Our pilgrimage of connection will guide us into what we will build with those blocks. The chief cornerstone of the building blocks provided for us is Jesus who showed us how to use the blocks, how to build. Our Pilgrimage will lead us to what we build. Lately, social media has been offering these little videos asking "which would you live in forever" with pictures of several types of houses. Our Pilgrimage this year will guide us to what type of spiritual home we build.

PASTOR LAURA CONTINUED—LENTEN SCHEDULE

Our Lenten Series of Co-Creators with God will be reinforcing and enhancing our Dreaming Pilgrimage. Please mark your calendars, and plan to attend:

- **February 14:** 7 pm. Ash Wednesday service with Communion and Imposition of Ashes. In the sanctuary.
- **February 21:** 6:30 pm. Service with soup. Downstairs Fellowship Hall.
- **February 28:** 6:30 pm. Service with Soup. Downstairs Fellowship Hall.
- **March 6:** 6:30 pm. Service with Soup. Downstairs Fellowship Hall.
- **March 9:** 9 a.m. to noon. All Church Retreat. Downstairs Sunday School area.
- **March 13:** 6:30 pm. Service with Soup. Downstairs Fellowship Hall.
- **March 20:** 6:30 pm. Service with Soup. Downstairs Fellowship Hall.
- **March 29:** 7 pm. Good Friday Service. In the Sanctuary.
- **March 31:** 10 am. Easter Service with Choir Cantata. In the Sanctuary.

May Bethel's Dreaming Pilgrimage reinforce our centering on God and participating in building a house of love.

God's PB&J,

Pastor Laura

FEBUARY BIRTHDAYS

2/2 Mike Mendon
2/4 Anna Achille
2/12 Maddy Kenyon
2/17 Clairra Faust

2/22 Randa Niederhauser, Mary Ann Pierson

PASTOR LAURA'S OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Laura's drop-in office hours: 9:00-12:00 Mon-Thurs, Sabbath – Friday.

Pastor Laura's cell phone: 360-461-6166

PRAYER CARE

Please pray for . . .

In Sympathy: The family of **Shianne** and **Dale Reith** on his passing.

For **Vince Watkins and family** on the passing of Vince's father, Harold

Jan Rickert; Randy Pace; Rachel Wolfe; Joe Luttrell; Adam Niederhauer; Rachel Terrill; Jamie Elder; Larry Jurgensen; Nelda Ravenscraft; Lauri Arbutnot; Gerry McGuire; Debbie Robinett; Marilyn Helmich; Elaine McDuff; Linda Jackson; Bobbi Wendle; Alice & Jim Inman; Vern Bohlmeier, Shianne Reith.

Art & Darlene Todtenhausen's friend Nicole's husband and their friend Jen; **Susan Schindler's** sister, Joy; **Ron Wendle's** brother, David; **Shirlee Mendon's** sister, Connie & brother-in-law, Larry ; **AnnaLee Kapp's** sister, Sara & niece, Caitlin & Brianna; **Randy & Marquita Pace's** friend, Doug; **Pat Armstrong & Don Sand's** friend, Gary; **Jamie Elder's** grandson, Caleb and friend, Don; **Fulvio & Kathy Hayes'** friend, Virginia; **Kim Heft's** brother, Warren; **Gerry Hendrix's** sister Donna; **Mary Fleener's** friends, JT & Nancy; **Marty Pace's** sister & brother-in-law, Michelle & Dan; **Rachel**

Wolfe's aunt & uncle, Beverly & Reggie; **Lauri Buck's** friend, Kristi; **AnnaLee Kapp's** relatives, the Hershman family & her friend Julie; **Bob Atkinson's** brother, David; **Marilyn Helmich's** daughter, Carolyn; **Randy Pace's** friend, Marvin



We will continue to keep these members and friends in our prayers. Each month the list will be reviewed, so keeping us informed of any additions or corrections is important.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING FUNDRAISER—FEB. 11



Raffle tickets are being sold to support paying off the lunchroom debt at Chouteau Elementary, Eastgate 6th Grade Center and financial support for Backpack Shepherds.

Raffle tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The drawing for the prizes will be February 11 immediately following worship. You need not be present

to win. The prizes include, Chiefs Super Bowl Jersey, Patrick Mahomes T-Shirt; Chiefs cutting board, Chiefs wallet organizer, Chiefs touch screen gloves, license plate frame and Chiefs 3-D coasters.

To finish off the day the Paces are hosting a Super Bowl Party at 5:30 pm at their home. Soup, non-alcoholic beverages will be provided. You may bring your beverage of choice and an appetizer or dessert. Sign up in the narthex if you are coming. All are welcome. A suggested donation of \$5 that will go to Backpack Shepherds



tacklehunger.org

AUDIO VISUAL TRAINING

Volunteers are needed to support the audio visual at Bethel. Fulvio Hayes is offering the opportunity to provide training for the audio visual support at Bethel. Training will be held after worship today and on February 11. If you have any questions contact Fulvio.

EVANGELISM PROJECT TO SUPPORT STUDENTS AT CHOUTEAU ELEMENTARY

In an effort to further support the students at Chouteau Elementary – we want to help recognize student birthdays. Our contact at Chouteau has indicated that donations of birthday napkins, or small items like colorful pencils or erasers, etc. would be very helpful. So that thought is we encourage congregation members to commemorate their own birthdays with a contribution to this effort. The church would be the collection point for these items. We will have signage on the bulletin board in the next week, and there will be a bin provided for the items being donated.

LECTORS & GREETERS NEEDED

Please remember to volunteer to be a Greeter or Lector. Call the office or use the sign up sheet to choose a date. No experience is necessary and everyone is welcome to participate!