



Bethel United Church of Christ



www.bethelucckc.com

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

**BENEVOLENCE—SPECIAL MISSION OFFERINGS
STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH & TEDDY BEARS**

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About Strengthen the Church

Thank You for supporting *Strengthen the Church*, one of four special mission offerings within the United Church of Christ. Each day, visions and dreams are created in the hearts of many in the United Church of Christ. Through this offering they can become a reality. As God calls our congregations to be "church" in new ways, your gift will:

- Plant **new churches** and awaken new ideas in existing churches
- Develop spiritual life in our **youth and young adults**
- Ensure many more will hear the good news that "**God is still speaking**,"

All gifts are directed to activities and programs of **your church's local conference** as well as the **UCC's national ministries**.

Your generosity today ensures our vi-

brant life today and tomorrow.

MAY 12—MOTHERS DAY—TEDDY BEARS

Celebrating Mothers, Giving Teddy Bears to Children's Mercy!

It's time to collect our "Teddy Bears" for Children's Mercy Hospital. We will be collecting "animals" through the month of May. The hospital likes to give each child a small teddy bear (stuffed animal) to hold and cuddle as they are moved from different doctors and departments during their stay. For Children's Mercy, your donated "teddy bears" or other stuffed animals must be new and the tags/labels left on. This special giving opportunity started in 2009 through a request from Sara Niederhauser.

Thanks, *Benevolence*



SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Fabulous 50's Party & Silent Auction Fundraiser—May 5**
- **Mother's Day Teddy Bear Giving—May 12**
- **Backpack Shepherds Summer Boxes Packing—May 20**
- **Homies—May 17**
- **Pentecost—"Wear Red"—May 19**
- **Bethel Parking Lot Concert & Neighborhood Event—June 29**

50'S THEMED FUNDRAISER PARTY—MAY 5TH

Following worship on May 5th. Lunch with 50's food (hot dogs, corn dogs, hamburgers, etc.), Prizes for best costume, silent auction and lots of fun. Plan on coming to join the fun and raise money for Bethel. Host by the Bethel Young Adults. Tickets are \$15 each.



50'S PARTY SILENT AUCTION

There is a silent auction as part of the 50's event on May 5th. There are several exciting opportunities you can bid on. The display of items and bid sheets are in the Narthex and the Northroom. All monies raised from the auction go to support Bethel's general fund.

SWEET GARDEN OF PRAYER



The wonder of spring is seeing the Great Re-awakening every year—the tiny buds on trees that seemingly overnight become fruit blossoms or leaves, the crocus bravely popping up their heads through the last vestiges of winter’s storms, the slow but sure greening of the grass that had dried brown. The world takes on color as the

Great Artist sprinkles the land with new and wondrous hues of green, blue, yellow, red, and purple.

Sometimes, the newness of spring comes upon us so subtly that one day we look out on the world in shock and surprise. When did that happen? When did the trees turn green again? When did the flowers burst open with blossoms? When did the sun reappear?

This springtime delight is played out in our own lives repeatedly throughout the seasons and stations of our lives. One day you look back and realize you’ve been on a long arduous journey and have come thousands of miles from your starting point. The potholes and hazards are a little easier to navigate. The road seems smoother because you’ve grown stronger and more sure of your steps with every rough road you’ve traversed along the way. In short—you’ve grown.

Bethel has been growing in wonderful ways as we have allowed ourselves to dream, to explore, to get to know each other and care for each other in new and deeper ways. Bethel is going through its own Great Re-Awakening into a new spring that comes with amazing promise!

A reflection on the Secret Prayer Partner boxes: One member recently shared that she sets an alarm every day so that she will stop and pray for her Partner. Another shared notes and gifts left by his Partner surprised and delighted him because they were personal—that his Partner actually *knew* him. Our Young Adults rush to their boxes on Sundays to look for treasures. I know that not all of you have had the same experiences. Hopefully, this will serve as a reminder for everyone to pray for their Partners, and leave something in their boxes reminding them that they are thought of and cared for.

What follows is the results from the Listening Sessions held during Lent. As we move into the next phases of our Dreaming Year, our summer retreat (date TBA) will again be a half-day retreat, and provide time and activity to continue deepening our connections. It will also center on deciding to which of these dreams we want to dedicate our time, talent, and treasure.

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God’s PB&J,
Pastor Laura

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

Wear Red
for Pentecost
May 19



PRAYER CARE

Please pray for . . .

Alice Terrill; Pat Armstrong; Gerry Hendrix; Randy Pace; Rachel Wolfe; Joe Luttrell; Adam Niederhauser; Rachel Terrill; Jamie Elder; Larry Jurgensen; Nelda Ravenscraft; Lauri Arbutnot; Gerry McGuire; Marilyn Helmich; Elaine McDuff; Linda Jackson; Bobbi Wendle; Alice & Jim Inman; Vern Bohlmeier, Shianne Reith

Gerry Hendrick's future granddaughter-in-law, Alex; Jeremy Faust's father, Ron; Jan Rickert on the passing of her moth-

er; Ron Wendle's brother, David; Vicki Thompson's father, Bill; Ted & Maggie Basch's daughter, Cindy; Kathy Harms sister-in-law, Terri; Art & Darlene Todtenhausen's friend Nicole's husband and their friend Jen; Susan Schindler's sister, Joy; 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;

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

**POUR OUT THE HOLY SPIRIT!!
IT'S PENTECOST SUNDAY! - MAY 19TH**



What a Sunday this will be as we celebrate the Holy Spirit being poured out on all of us. It was on this day over 2000 years ago that the followers of Christ were empowered by the Holy Spirit to form a movement that would ultimately become the 'Church' and here we are today still celebrating what God has done by sending Jesus into this world to show us the way of bringing God's reign.

COME CELEBRATE THE BIRTH OF THE CHURCH!!

See you on May 19 — WEAR RED!!

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR FINAL BACKPACK SHEPHERDS PACK



Volunteers are needed May 20th to do the final pack of the school year for Backpack Shepherds. If you can help with the set up be at Church of the Good Shepherd, 4947 NE Chouteau Dr. at 4:30 pm. Packing will begin at 6:00 pm. After packing is done you are invited to stay and enjoy pizza provided for all those volunteering for the final pack. We need to know if you can help. Please call Pat Armstrong at 816-695-7825 if you can help.



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR JUNE 29TH—COME HEAR SUSAN DRAKE & JULIE JENNINGS “ORIGINAL WOMEN”

Come hear a special concert and neighborhood event Saturday, June 29th, sponsored jointly by Bethel and HO-NA (Heartland Open and Affirming Coalition) in the Bethel parking lot. Running from 5 till 8pm, the evening will feature musical entertainment, food trucks, and plenty of opportunity for casual conversation, games, and getting to know Bethel's neighbors.

Featured musical entertainment for the evening will be the singing duo “Original Women”. Well known in the St. Louis area, the partners in the duo, Susan Drake and Julie Jennings, have been making music together since 1999. Susan and Julie bring crisp social critique, bold honesty, emotional integrity, and passion for life to their songs and their singing. Partners in life, they apply these gifts and much love to co-parenting their children, Sarah and Andrew. Susan and Julie are both ordained ministers in the United Church of Christ. “Original Women” will perform from 7 till 8 that evening.

Providing a musical “opening act” will be Bethel's own dynamic jazz musical group, always a treat! Food truck offerings will include Philly Steak Sandwiches, Chicken Wraps, Custom Brownies, and much more.

MAY BIRTHDAYS



2 Matt Hendrix
Joe Luttrell
3 Vicki Thompson
6 Vern Bohlmeyer
Debbie Robinett

12 Gerry McGuire
Larry Jurgensen
18 Jane Bohlmeyer
25 Linda Hendrix

29 Kyle Buck
Danielle Hendrix
31 Bob Barrall

LECTORS & GREETERS NEEDED

Please remember to volunteer to be a Greeter or Lector. Sign up in the Narthex to choose a date. No experience is necessary and everyone is welcome to participate!

BACKPACK SHEPHERDS NEEDS

- Canned Chili or Canned Stew
- Fruit Cups
- Pudding Snack Packs
- Granola Bars
- Snack Cakes (like Little Debbie's)
- Canned Green Beans
- Canned Corn
- Canned Pork 'n Beans
- Canned Pasta
- Pop-Tarts
- Muffin Mix



ARE YOU READING THE NEWSLETTER?

Find the Treasure—Hint: Jesus' only commandment.



BETHEL HOMIES

May 17th, We return to Christine's Fire House Restaurant, 2012 Swift, NKC, MO Meet at restaurant – 11:00.

HOMIES, watch for the upcoming HOMIES Newsletter for June. If you want the Newsletter, let Randy Pace know, he'll put you on the email list. **Please give me a call or text if you're going, or need a ride**, so I can get a count for the restaurant, and meet you at the parking lot. Remember, all HOMIES meetings are scheduled for the **3rd Friday of each month**.

SCHEDULE for next three months:

MAY 17th Lunch Christine's Fire House Restaurant 11:00 am.

JUN 21st 169 Café, 203 169 Hwy, Smithville, MO. Rides from Bethel Church – depart parking lot 10:30.

JUL 19th **ANNUAL TRIP - BIG BRUTUS**, West Mineral, KS, Depart Bethel Church 9 AM Lunch in Pittsburg, KS



"Hungry Old Men Involved in Eating Sessions"

BETHEL'S DREAMING YEAR LISTENING SESSION RESULTS

Five separate Listening Sessions were held, one for the Young Adults, and four for adults hosted by different congregation members. Every active member of the church was invited to attend one session. Participants were asked to consider how Bethel UCC is currently impacting its members, its community, and the world; how Bethel UCC could have a greater impact on those three groups, what fund-raisers Bethel UCC could develop to bring in additional income to the general fund; and, finally, what dreams do we have for Bethel (sky's the limit, no nay-saying!)

Many suggestions and comments overlapped from group to group.

How is Bethel currently impacting its members, its community, the world.

- **Members:** Groups such as HOMIES, bell choir, chancel choir, ukuleles, recorders, game nights, Talent Show, Secret Prayer Partners.
- **Community:** Local school support, Backpack Shepherds, WIC, voting site, Greencastle, HONA, 5 for 5, monthly benevolences, Reiki, allowing homeless to shelter in chapel.
- **World:** OCWM, Church World Service, CROP Walk, world crises response (such as Lahaina fire, earthquakes, water shortages, etc.)

How could we have a greater impact on members, community, the world.

- **Members:** Quarterly potlucks, involve the church youth more, develop better outlines and definitions of commission roles, restructuring of Council and commissions, develop attitude of feeling good about trying new things and experimenting, expand the music program (with additional help for Jeremy), having some months of just one kind of music—jazz, choir, recorders, etc., a year-round music program with no summer break, be more caring and try harder to work together, be better at letting members know what is going on at Bethel, add more things people can do together such as make a quilt together for Festival of Sharing, resurrect Dinner for Eight program, members visit shut-ins at hospitals and nursing homes, update time and talent sheet to include listing a challenge to try something new.
- **Community:** Tutoring children, do a seasonal cleanup at Blue Springs Terrace, help shut-ins with work days, raise a bell tower, send out invitations to neighborhood, driveway chalk, Habitat for Humanity, allow community groups to use the facility for meetings such as an AA group, start a card group, renewing Kids Fest, bring a friend to church days, events for the community (such as outdoor concert and food trucks), public concerts, outdoor movies down below during summer.
- **World:** Continue and expand green energy solutions, partner with other UCC churches for missions, reach out to Red Cross or other organizations for volunteering opportunities.

From our Youth

- They enjoy playing various games.
- Bible-based games added to lessons are great
- Have the youth decorate the church (visibility of our youth program)
- Make cards for Christmas, etc., for the Prayer Partner boxes
- Veterans Day breakfast
- Bring a friend to church day
- Water Balloons on Pentecost (But no trivia questions)
- Change bulletin to Young Adults Time not Children's Time
- Palm Sunday Sundaes

Ideas for fund raisers which would replace the bazaar/past fundraisers.

- Garage sale
- Fabulous 50's Party
- Cookbook to market to the community, not just Bethel
- Musical program
- Large garden to grow and sell produce
- Farmers' market in Bethel parking lot
- Outdoor art show/sale with an art auction
- Festival with food trucks
- Bake sale similar to cookie exchange
- Community dinner with silent auction
- Talents and services auction
- Fish Fry
- BBQ
- Spaghetti Dinner

Bethel's Got Dreams—what would you love to see happening at Bethel?

- Become more Bible literate
- Grow membership
- More choir participants
- More social interaction among members (Dinner for Eight)
- A picnic shelter with seating for outdoor events
- Mentoring program for area youth
- Have an adult attend Sunday School to have childrens' voices heard
- Announce youth's activities (with their permission) in the bulletin so congregation can be aware of activities and attend for support (sports, music concerts, competitions, etc.)
- More vibrancy

- Provide assistance with snow shoveling, lawn mowing, etc., to elderly in the neighborhood
- Bolster and grow support for what we already have
- Erect a bell tower
- Enable administration to really take care of the building and campus with equipment and resources
- Keep moving forward
- Larger participation in church events/activities
- Different location
- Open up the sanctuary by removing pews and using chairs (better for older people and those with mobility issues—makes church more accessible)
- Each music group to have its own practice times
- More help for additional music groups
- Expand music program
- Outdoor and indoor concerts
- Use screens in sanctuary and have congregation sing contemporary song
- Lenten small groups
- Adult Sunday School (maybe Zoom on a weekday)
- Praise Service
- Ensure facility is vibrant and inviting
- Have choir seated and singing up front
- Reconfigure front altar space
- Partner with another UCC for VBS
- Make UCC more known denomination
- Change order of worship
- Parents' Day Out for area kids
- Free college (tuition assistance)
- Vibrant youth program
- Cover for walkway to door
- More youth activities
- More people prioritizing church services and activities
- Pickle ball and corn hole courts
- Door knocking
- Presence at events showing Open and Affirming status
- Drop-in card games
- English as a Second Language program
- Spanish (or other languages) as Second Language program
- Adult Learning/Enhancement programs
- Larger cross illuminated at night