



Bethel United Church of Christ

JANUARY 2024



www.bethelucck.com

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

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

BENEVOLENCE—SPECIAL MISSION OFFERING



City Union Mission is an evangelical Christian ministry committed to sharing the gospel and meeting the spiritual, physical and emotional needs of men, women and children who are poor or homeless. City Union Mission is committed to serving the Lord by meeting the physical, spiritual, educational and emotional needs of the poor and homeless. They receive no government support, and they are not a United Way agency. They depend completely on donations from individuals, groups, businesses, foundations and churches. Since

1924, City Union Mission has provided warm beds, nutritious food and a place of safety for thousands of poverty-stricken and homeless men, women, and children. Founded by Rev. and Mrs. David Bulkley, the Mission's staff has been uncompromising in our commitment to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the hurting and the lost. City Union Mission receives no government support and is not a United Way agency. The Mission depends completely on the gifts of God's people - individuals, churches, groups, foundations, and businesses who have a heart for the poor and homeless.

ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING—JANUARY 28

The Annual Congregational meeting will be held following worship on January 28th. Voting on final approval of the budget for 2024 and hearing reports from all Commissions are on the agenda. All annual reports from Commissions and committees are due by January 15th. (See article on page 5.)

BACKPACK SHEPHERDS JANUARY NEEDS

Needs for January:

- Cereal Boxes 10-14 oz.
- Canned Chicken 10 or 12 oz.
- Pasta Sides
- Pancake Mix
- Tuna Helper
- Fruit Cups 4 or 6 count
- Microwave Popcorn
- Snack Cakes
- Tortillas or Taco Shells



Pat Armstrong, Bethel Rep.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- SWEET HOUR OF PRAYER FROM PASTOR LAURA** 2
- PRAYER CARE** 3
- THANK YOU** 3
- BIRTHDAYS** 3
- ANNUAL REPORTS DUE** 5

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Council & Commission Reports—Jan. 14**
- **Bethel Book Club—Jan. 18**
- **Annual Congregational Mtg—Jan. 28**

SWEET GARDEN OF PRAYER

First, thank you to everyone for your generosity and thoughtfulness. Your gifts, cards, and love are very much appreciated! Bob and I are so blessed to be here at Bethel—you are an answer to our prayers, as well as so many others'!

As we enter the next steps in Bethel's Dreaming Year, be looking for your invitation to a Listening Session. This will come sometime between now and our Lenten Retreat. The Listening Sessions will be small group gatherings designed for you to be able to express your thoughts, dreams, and desires for Bethel. DREAM BIG! Don't fret the details!

The Lenten Retreat will be a HALF DAY Retreat on Saturday, March 9. Mark your calendars NOW!

Speaking of Lent...it begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, 2024. Yes, that's also Valentine's Day. Maybe it's fitting to consider our mortality on the day we celebrate Love. After all, only Love is eternal, and it is God's Love that gives us hope and life. We will have Wednesday evening Soup Suppers and Services (combined in the North Room) throughout Lent. More on that next month.

Don't forget to be praying (preferably daily) for your Secret Prayer Partner. You may drop notes/cards/gifts/whatever you are inspired to do in their boxes at any time. There are booklets with prayers for you to take, and there are cards to use in the Narthex. You may not think your prayers and love can make a difference, but the truth is—your prayers and love are the ONLY thing that can make a difference in a person's life!

Have a restful January!

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

PRAYER CARE

Please pray for . . .

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

Ron Wendle's brother, David; **Shirlee Mendon's** sister, Connie & brother-in-law, Larry, ; **AnnaLee Kapp's** sister, Sara& niece, Cait-

lin & Brianna; **Art & Darlene Todtenhausen's** friend, Jen; **Randy & Marquita Pace's** friend, Doug; **Pastor Laura's** friend, Terie; **Chad Willis' mother,** Kristy; **Pat Armstrong & Don Sand's** friend, Gary; **Jamie Elder's** grandson, Caleb and friend, Don; **Fulvio & Kathy Hayes' friend,** Virginia; **Adele Jones; Kim Heft's** brother, Warren; **Gerry Hendrix's** sister Donna; **Vince Watkins' father,** Harold & step-brother Glen; **Bev Duer's** sister, Nancy; **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 Hersman family & her friend Julie; **Bob Atkinson's** brother, David; **Marilyn Helmich's** daughter, Carolyn; **Randy Pace's** friend, Marvin, Adelle Jones in hospice care in St. Louis, and the family of Caren Fletcher on her death, celebration of life, January 4, 2-4 pm Terrace Park Lake Side Chapel, KCMO



THANK YOU

Thank you so much for thinking of me & my children. We really appreciate it. Thank you for being a huge blessing. May God be with you and your families this holiday season. Hillcrest Ministries Adopted Families

Dear Bethel UCC,

Mahalo nui for your congregation's donation of \$2,778. We are hoping to rebuild starting this time next year. Thank You from Maui. Judy Kinser, Trustee, Waiola Church in Lahaina, HI

To Members of Bethel,

What a joy to hear the beautiful voices of Bethel members caroling at my home. Thank you so very much for braving the cold weather and making my day very special! God bless you! Gerry McGuire

Dear Bethel Book Club at Bethel UCC,

We are overwhelmed by your generosity! The reading games and materials will allow us to reinforce the skills we are teaching our reading students in a fun, engaging way.

Thank you, Nickki Stine & Lori Morgan, Reading Teachers at Chouteau Elementary School

Happy New year and thanks for the cards, food and best wishes for all.
Marilyn Donahoe

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS



4	Marsha Wilson	16	Kristen Marshall	23	Jeremy Manley
6	Joleea Wolfe	15	Steve McDuff	26	Bev Duer, Jason Fleener
8	Amy Lane	21	Eddie Villanueva	28	Dana Monroe
12	Chad Willis, Rachel Wolfe	22	Tiara Williams	31	Eleanor Faust

BETHEL ANNUAL FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Yearly donation statements will be available in January by contacting Shirlee Mendon (shirlmendon@gmail.com or 816-806-7117). The statements can be emailed to you or printed and available for pick up at the church.

Shirlee Mendon, Financial Secretary

CHOUTEAU ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

As part of Bethel's commitment to Chouteau Elementary, 7 members helped at the school's 2nd annual Fancy Winter Feast for students on December 19th. Stan Niederhauser and Mary Ann Pierson provided musical entertainment and the rest of us helped to serve appetizers (Chex Mix) and cookies. This has become a favorite event at the school. Bethel provided snowman face cookies for the dessert treat. Thanks to everyone who came out to help decorate the cookies. We made more than 400 decorated cookies! The kids loved them!

Bethel has committed to help Chouteau Elementary throughout the school year. Stay tuned for more ways to help.



POINSETTIA'S DONATED FOR 2023

Poinsettia's were donated this Christmas in honor and/or memory of the following loved ones.

In memory of our family and friends by Pat Armstrong & Don Sand

In memory of Doug Berka, Arlis Neddermeyer, Karen Lind-Olsen

In memory of our families by Vern & Sandy Bohlmeier

In honor of Geri McGuire; our mother, grammy & great grammy by Stephanie Dodd, Kim Yennie & Alex Mortallaro

In memory of Mark Easley and James & Ruby Westerfield Sr. by Jeanene Easley & Family

In memory of Roger Fleener, Herb & Cassie Johnstono by Mary Fleener

In memory of John, Julius & Lavonia Meyer, Donna, Orene & Frank Fischer by Jody Meyer

In memory of Jop Jopling, Anna Jopling & Gordon Harms by Kathy Harms & Betty Weger

In memory of David Kendrick by The Monroe Family

BETHEL BOOK CLUB

BOOK CLUB—Thursday, January 18th— 6:30 pm at Marquita Pace's home

We have a book picked out for January entitled, *Remarkably Bright Creatures* by Shelby Van Pelt. "*Remarkably Bright Creatures*" is a book revolving around a mischievous giant pacific octopus in a small town aquarium, attended by a lovely old lady who cleans it. The two unlikely friends navigate their individual isolated lives, as both deal with heartbreak and other tensions that everyone is familiar with.

COUNCIL AND COMMISSION MEMBERS 2024

Council: Sonja Payne—President, Kathy Harms—Vice President, Mary Fleener (non-Council member)—Secretary, Kathy Hayes, Shirlee Mendon, Jennie Watkins, Art Todtenhausen, Steve McDuff, Randa Neiderhauser

Council Representatives from Commissions: **Administration** – Mary Ann Pierson, **Benevolence**— Debbie Robinett,

Christian Education—Dale Rickert, **Membership**– Stephanie Dodd, **Evangelism**—Kim Heft, **Financial Secretary** – Shirlee Mendon

Administration: Randy Pace, Chair, Larry Jurgensen, Fulvio Hayes, Jay Marshall, Mary Ann Pierson—Treasurer, Hance Pierson, Mike Mendon, Ted Basch, Don Sand, Bob Barrall

Benevolence: Marquita Pace—Chair, Debbie Robinett, Jamie Elder, Liz Guevel, Betty Weger

Christian Education: Susan Schindler, Sophie Lane, Jessica Faust, Dale Rickert, Lauri Buck, Shellie Willis

Evangelism: Stan Niederhauser, Kim Heft, Pat Armstrong, Jan Rickert

Membership : Bev Duer—Chair, Jody Meyer, Gerry Hendrix, Stephanie Dodd, Jeanene Easley, Andrea Berka

PLEDGE UPDATE

The budget for 2024 is approximately \$166,273. As of now we have received twenty-four pledges for a total of \$109,120. It is not too late to send or bring in your pledge. For the 2023 meeting year, we had twenty-eight pledges for a total of \$117,832, so although our pledges have increased, our budget has increased as well. Every pledge is appreciated and needed to continue the work of our church.

LECTORS & GREETERS NEEDED

Please remember to volunteer to be a Greeter or Lector. Email Bethel at betelucckc@gmail.com or use the sign up sheet to choose a date. No experience is necessary and everyone is welcome to participate!

BETHEL FINANCIAL UPDATE—WHERE WE ARE & WHAT WE NEED

To meet 2023 monthly budgeted expenses, we need \$14,346 in contributions. Current fund contributions for December were \$14,009, resulting in a budget shortfall of \$337. As of the end of November, total expenses have exceeded total income by over \$10,000. If this trend continues, we'll have serious cash flow issues next year, requiring us to dip heavily into our reserves.

REPORTS FOR ANNUAL REPORT DUE BY JANUARY 14

All Committee, Commission, Pastor, Council and other Reports are due no later than January 15. These reports need to be sent to Marquita Pace for Bethel's 2023 Annual Report. The report is due to be submitted to the congregational at the

Annual Congregational Meeting on January 28. You may email the reports to Marquita Pace at mqtapace@gmail.com or by mail at 7711 N. Kansas Ave. Kansas City, MO 64119. Call Marquita at 816-810-5706 if you have any questions.

- Council Report
- Financial Secretary's Report
- Administration
- Benevolence
- Christian Education
- Membership
- Evangelism
- Pastor
- Audit Committee
- Bethel Bazaar
- Bethel Book Club
- Bethel HOMIES
- Bethel WOW
- Not So Young Adults
- Stewardship
- Outreach to the Community
 - Prayer Shawl Ministry
 - Reiki Group
 - WIC Program
 - Voting Center
 - Boy Scout Troop
- Worship Committee
 - Music Director
 - Visual Arts
- Financial Reports
 - Treasurer's Report
 - Bethel 2024 Budget

Unhanging of the Greens—January 7 in celebration of Epiphany

Following worship we will undecorate the church. Grab a snack in Bistro and lend a hand to unhang all the greens. With all of us working together that task will not take long.

WEATHER ADVISORY NOTICES FOR BETHEL SERVICES

Although we intend to not cancel services, if weather conditions are such that we need to reconsider notices will be put on local stations about church service closures, it is planned that Bethel's notice of closure will be on Channel 9 (KMBC-TV 9), Channel 4 (Fox4—WDAF), and on Bethel's website at www.bethelucckc.com and facebook. Decisions for canceling worship services will be made by the Church Council.

PLEDGES 2024

To date we have received pledges from 24 giving units for a pledged amount of \$109,120. We want to thank all who pledged and those who give through out the year. Bethel is looking forward to serving God and community in 2024 through the continued support of our congregation. If you haven't turned in your pledge it's not too late.

