

November 2008

BETHEL MESSENGER



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www.bethelucc-ada.org (920) 565-2977

Morse Code

God called me to serve Bethel United Church of Christ on Sunday, August 24, 2003 and my first Sunday was October 26, 2003. To look back at all that we have done in this short period of time is pretty remarkable. Over the course of this time, I have sat with you during tears of sadness and laughed with you in moments of joy. I have prayed with you, counseled you, pushed you and you, in return, have challenged, supported, and loved. You are my first church – the church that was there to be a part of my ordination into the ministry, my first installation, and the church that celebrated with Tim and me in our wedding. You have been a part of many firsts in my life. Through each of these moments I remain humbled and blessed that you have put your trust in me.

We have done many things over the past five years:

- We have participated in mission trips to Pine Ridge Reservation in South Dakota and Back Bay Mission in Biloxi, Mississippi.
- We participated in local mission opportunities by supporting Habitat for Humanity, the Kiel Community Pantry, the Good Samaritan Fund for the greater Kiel area, the Emmaus Meals program through the Salvation Army, CROP Walks, and the Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization.
- We worshipped together with our ecumenical community in the Kiel/New

Holstein area on Good Friday and on the Kiel Picnic Sunday.

- We had internal conversations about how we do things:
 - Adopted a revised Constitution and By-laws that assist our governance.
 - Completed a policy and procedure binder for leadership of our church to consult.
 - Had extensive dialogue about the Sacrament of Holy Communion and children.
 - Were courageous enough to complete a gifts and talents survey.
 - Created committees and teams to assist in living out our mission as a local church.
 - Creating job descriptions to clarify the roles and responsibilities of our paid staff.
- Walked parade routes exposing our name to the wider community.
- Enhanced our website to make it user friendly and engaging.
- Watched our congregation grow as we welcomed new members and new faces through the waters of baptism and the rite of confirmation.
- We have watched our Youth Volleyball Team bring home many trophies from the Rural Church Volleyball League.

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- Experienced Christian education on

Sunday mornings and Wednesday mornings.

- Watched the Worship team grow and develop as they brought their creative spirit to Sunday worship.
- We became a 5 for 5 congregation. We have contributed to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM), One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund. We have also supported the Seminaries of the United Church of Christ in particular: Chicago Theological Seminary, United Theological Seminary, and Eden Theological Seminary.
- We have supported the life of this congregation by meeting or exceeding our budget each year that I have been your pastor.
- We have supported our confirmation students in their faith journey as they participated with the other local UCC churches in their annual retreats.
- We have supported the children of our church through Sunday school and Vacation Bible school programs.
- The beauty of this church was enhanced with the completion of our second phase of our landscaping design.
- We have continued to put on a stellar chili supper and apple pie sale.
- You have supported your pastor as she pursued wider church activities on the Association and National levels of our denomination.

The creative energy of the Holy Spirit is alive and well within this congregation. It is through this energy that makes you a vibrant and alive church. It is remarkable what we have done and it will be remarkable what you will do for God is not through with you.

I encourage you to focus on your core values

as a congregation. I encourage you to look at the mission of this church. The core values in which you live by and the mission of this congregation will provide a foundation for you to live in healthy ways with each other. How will you continue to live out your mission in healthy ways? How will you faithfully communicate this mission with each other and the wider community? How will you hold each other accountable?

I do not have the words to convey how blessed I have been to be your pastor during this enriching and transformative time. May you continue to engage one another in the service and celebration to which this congregation has been called. May God bless you always!

Your faithful pastor and teacher,

Rev. Sara

Upcoming Events at Bethel:

1. Totenfest and Communion, Sunday, November 2, 2008
2. Rev. Sara's last Sunday, November 9, 2008
3. Confirmation Retreat - Friday, November 14 – Sunday, November 16
4. Thanksgiving Eve Service – Wednesday, November 26th at 7:30 p.m.
5. First Sunday of Advent – November 30, 2008
6. Communion – Sunday, December 7, 2008



Choir Director

Bethel UCC is in search of a choir director. If you are interested or would like more information about the position please contact Cary Knier Johannes by November 16.

Helping our Community

We are collecting hats, mittens, and socks for children ages infant – 14 for the Salvation Army. Please place items in the basket in the Narthex by Thanksgiving Eve. They will be delivered to the Salvation Army in Sheboygan the week following Thanksgiving.

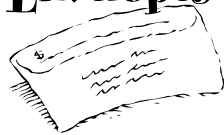
Would you like to ring bells for the Salvation Army but the weather keeps you away? Maybe you'd like to be part of a relief team. How about helping the Salvation Army bring kettles in at night or get a group together and count kettles one night? Please see Jodi Voss for more information.

Think about kicking off your holiday season by serving a meal at the Salvation Army. Our next Emmaus Meals is Saturday, November 29th at the Salvation Army in Sheboygan. Food preparation will be Friday, November 28th (the day following Thanksgiving) at 1:00pm at church. Please sign-up to help either Friday or Saturday. We could particularly use help on Saturday from 10:30am - 1:00pm. A list of items needed for the meal will also be placed in the narthex.

You can now pick up your 2009 offering envelopes.

They are located on the table in the narthex. If you currently do not have offering envelopes and would like some please contact Judy Zimmermann, our financial secretary, at 920-565-3598. You can also do an Automatic Funds Transfer (AFT) if you would prefer. Please see Judy about AFT as well.

Offering Envelopes



It's time to be thinking about

Thanksgiving!

On Wednesday, November 26th at 7:30 p.m. we will be having



our Thanksgiving Eve service in which we share many of God's gifts and talents. People are invited to share their gifts of singing, playing instruments, reading poetry/stories, etc. If you are interested in contributing to this service there is a sign up sheet on the table in the narthex. The last day to sign up is Sunday, November 16th. We will be collecting hats, mittens, and socks for children ages infant to 14 for the Salvation Army and food for the Kiel Community Pantry.

Forward in Faith

In 2001, Bethel UCC made the decision to take part in the Forward in Faith campaign, a campaign of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ to support various ministries within our conference. Our commitment was to give \$2000.00 each year for five years. At the end of 2007, we contributed \$6975.00 to this special campaign leaving us with \$3025.00 left of our original goal. To help meet this goal, at our January 2008 Annual Meeting we agreed to contribute \$1500.00 this year and \$1500 next year. At the beginning of this endeavor it was calculated that if each member would contribute \$20.00 a year to this campaign our goal could be accomplished. Our contributions to this campaign are earmarked to support the educational needs of Lakeland College; specifically, this money will go to endow a chair in "Christian thought." Let's remember our commitment and give to this campaign. There are envelopes available for you to use located in the sanctuary or in the memo of your check indicate that your offering is for Forward in Faith. If you have any questions, contact a member of the Consistory.

Kiel Community Pantry is in need of the following items:

Trash bags
Bleach
Canned Vegetables
Canned Fruit
Stuffing Mix



Looking for Resources? The Northeast Association of the Wisconsin Conference has partnered with the ELCA Resource Center in providing information for local churches. If you are looking for information like adult education topics, Sunday school curriculum, skits, or youth resources this center has it plus a whole lot more. Contact them for further information – they are willing to help!

ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church of America) Resource Center
East Central Synod of Wisconsin
16 Tri-Park Way
Appleton, WI 54914
(phone) 920-734-3797
www.ecsw.org/resourcecenter

Rural Church Fellowship Study Group

The RCF Study Group will meet from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. on Tuesday, November 11 and Tuesday, December 9. The Study Opportunity will be led by Rev. Michele Rogers Brigham! Our Rural Church Fellowship study group will meet at Immanuel to see parts of a DVD on "forgiveness" and have a discussion around "The Theology and Practice of Forgiveness." You are welcome to come one or both nights! Please invite a friend and enjoy the fellowship and study we may share together as local UCC churches. Free and open to everyone not UCC as well!

Newsletter Update: If you would like to

put something in the December / January edition of the newsletter please submit items to Cindy Meyer (cindy.meyer@bethelucc-ada.org) by November 15th. Thank you!

Winter Farmers Market

The Sheboygan County Interfaith Organization will host a Winter Farmers Market at First Congregation Church UCC at 310 Bluff Ave., Sheboygan. The time is 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. on November 15th, November 29th, December 13th, December 27th, January 10th, January 24th, February 28th, March 14th, March 28th, April 11th and April 25th. Products available: Honey, Baked Goods, Herbs, Dog Treats, Jams & Jellies, Cheese, Eggs, Poultry, Beef, Greek Pastries, Coffees, and much more. For more information call SCIO at (920)457-7272 extension 11.



Weatherization Services

Weatherization Services can help you reduce your home heating bills and conserve energy. Your home can be warmer in the winter and cooler in the summer. If you are eligible for Weatherization services, and energy auditor will look at your home to see what can be done to make it more energy efficient. You must receive the Wisconsin's Home Energy Assistance Program (WHEAP) benefits during the heating season to qualify for the Weatherization services. You may also be eligible if ALL MEMBERS of your household have received Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or your family received Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). If you are interested in participating the Weatherization program, please contact us at Sheboygan County call 920-459-3207 and Manitowoc County call 920-683-2888 to make an appointment.

