

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18018

Hours: Mon, Tues and Thurs. 9:30-1:30

Church Office: 610-868-4441

E-Mail: bethanyunitedchurch@rcn.com

Web address: www.uccbethany.org

Pastor Todd Fennell

Matt Miller, Consistory President

Susan Wright, Director of Music



Faith is the assurance
of things hoped for,
the conviction
of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1, NRSV



September 17, 2023 Sixteenth Sunday after Pentecost

“Moving Forward United in Faith”

“Committed to Christ, United by Love. We are about God, Christ, the Word, and the Future. No matter who you are or where you are on Life’s journey, you are welcome here. We are Bethany United Church of Christ.”

BETHANY UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

September 17, 2023

10:45 AM

We encourage our visitors to include their name, address, and phone number in the Guest Book at the top of the steps and come again. If you are looking for a church home, we invite you to become part of the community of faith and mission here at Bethany.

(* PLEASE STAND AS YOU ARE ABLE
(Bold Text is said or sung by everyone))

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE: "O Waly, Waly" ...arr. K. Mc Chesney
Handbell Choir

CALL TO WORSHIP

L: Bless the Holy One with our whole selves. Praise the Maker of our being!

C: Remember the mighty deeds and the good works of our God.

L: The Sovereign One endows us with many gifts and equips us to do good work.

C: Remember the mighty deeds and the good works of our God.

L: Holy Love entered the world without condemnation but with grace and forgiveness, mercy and compassion, redemption and restoration.

C: Hallelujah! We give thanks for the mighty deeds and the good works of our God!

*HYMN: "Down in My Heart" ... G. W. Cooke

I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy down in my heart, Down in my heart, down in my heart. I've got the joy, joy, joy, joy, down in my heart Down in my heart to stay! I've got the

love of Jesus, love of Jesus, down in my heart, Down in my heart down in my heart, I've got the love of Jesus, love of Jesus down in my heart Down in my heart to stay. I've got the peace that passeth understanding down in my heart, Down in my heart, down in my heart, I've got the peace that passeth understanding down in my heart, Down in my heart to stay!

***PRAYER OF INVOCATION (unison)**

God who calls, it is You who gathers us together and forms us as a community. It is You who makes us uniquely individual and who designs us for companionship. Let us journey together this day in Your presence reminded of our interdependence with one another. May we see Your glory and be inspired to demonstrate Your goodness and care through our lives. Amen.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

Pastor: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also, with you.

***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE (unison): "Love Come A-Tricklin' Down (Spiritual)**

Seek and ye shall find, Knock and the door shall be open, Ask and it shall be given, and the love come a-tricklin' down. Praise God, the Lord is with me! Praise God, the Lord is with me; Praise God, the Lord is with me, and the love come a-tricklin' down. Seek and ye shall find, Knock and the door shall be open, Ask and it shall be given, and the love come a-tricklin' down.

READING OF SCRIPTURE

Hebrews 11: 1-3, 8-16

***Matthew 18: 21-35**

Leader: This is the Good News

People: Thanks be to God!

SERMON: "Faith With a Three Way Stretch"

OFFERING INVITATION

OFFERING OF OUR TITHES and GIFTS

OFFERTORY: "Gaudeamus Hodie" (Let Us Rejoice Today)
...N. Sleeth Chancel Choir

*OFFERTORY RESPONSE: "God Is So Good" ... Folk Song
**God is so good, God is so good, God is so good, He's
so good to me. He loves me so, He loves me so, He
loves me so. He's so good to me.**

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION:

**Holy One, we thank you for revealing yourself to us
and through us with abundance and flourishing. Give us
generous hearts. May our offerings offer a testimony
honoring your provision and giving glory to your name.
Receive these gifts and magnify them for the needs of
your creation. Amen.**

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

HYMN: "Standin' In The Need Of Prayer (Spiritual)

**It's me, it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer;
It's me, it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of prayer.
Not my father, not my mother, but's it's me, O Lord,
standin' in the need of prayer. Not my sister, not my
brother, but it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of
prayer. It's me, it's me O Lord, standin' in the need of
prayer, it's me, it's me, O Lord, standin' in the need of
prayer.**

CALL TO PRAYER – PASTORAL PRAYER - THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

*HYMN: "He's Got the Whole World In His Hand" ...trad.
Spiritual

He's got the whole wide world in His hands, He's got the big round world in His hands, He's got the whole wide world in His hands, He's got the whole world in his hands.

He's got the wind and the rain in His hands, He's got the sun and the moon in His hands, He's got the wind and rain in his hands, He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got that tiny little baby, in his hands, He's got that helpless little baby in His hands, He's got that tiny little baby in his hands, He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got you and me brother, in his hands, He's got you and me sister in His hands, he's got you and me brother in his hands, He's got the whole world in His hands.

He's got everybody in his hands, He's got everybody in his hands, He's got everybody in his hands, He's got the whole world in his hands.

*BENEDICTION

*CHORAL BENEDICTION: “All Night, All Day
All night, all day, angels watchin’ over me my Lord, all night, all day, Angels watchin’ over me. (Thy love) stay with me through the night, Angels watchin’ over me, my Lord, wake me with the morning light, Angels watchin’ over me. All night, all day, Angels watchin’ over me my Lord, All night, all day, angels watchin over me.

POSTLUDE

Our worship ends, our service begins!



FLOWERS: and BULLETINS: are dedicated to the honor and Glory of God by Len and Rebecca Kesselring

GREETERS: Len Kesselring

USHERS: Len Kesselring, Tom Hoffert

LAY READER: Debbie Brown

Scriptures

Hebrews 11: 1 - 3, 8 – 16 NRSV

11 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. ² Indeed, by faith our ancestors received approval. ³ By faith we understand that the worlds were prepared by the word of God, so that what is seen was made from things that are not visible.

⁸ By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to set out for a place that he was to receive as an inheritance, and he set out, not knowing where he was going. ⁹ By faith he stayed for a time in the land he had been promised, as in a foreign land, living in tents, as did Isaac and Jacob, who were heirs

with him of the same promise. ¹⁰ For he looked forward to the city that has foundations, whose architect and builder is God. ¹¹ By faith, with Sarah's involvement, he received power of procreation, even though he was too old, because he considered him faithful who had promised. ¹² Therefore from one person, and this one as good as dead, descendants were born, "as many as the stars of heaven and as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore."

¹³ All of these died in faith without having received the promises, but from a distance they saw and greeted them. They confessed that they were strangers and foreigners on the earth, ¹⁴ for people who speak in this way make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. ¹⁵ If they had been thinking of the land that they had left behind, they would have had opportunity to return. ¹⁶ But as it is, they desire a better homeland, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore, God is not ashamed to be called their God; indeed, he has prepared a city for them.

Matthew 18: 21 – 35 NRSV

²¹ Then Peter came and said to him, "Lord, if my brother or sister sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" ²² Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy-seven times. ²³ "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. ²⁴ When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him, ²⁵ and, as he could not pay, the lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions and payment to be made. ²⁶ So the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' ²⁷ And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt. ²⁸ But that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow

slaves who owed him a hundred denarii, and seizing him by the throat he said, 'Pay what you owe.' ²⁹ Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' ³⁰ But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt. ³¹ When his fellow slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. ³² Then his lord summoned him and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' ³⁴ And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt. ³⁵ So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

Rummage Sale

Rummage Sale donations can now be brought to Bethany for the Oct. 6th and Oct. 7th sale. Please bring them to the Sunday school room to the right of the stage. Also please sign up for any help that you are able to give or contact Sharon Haines @ momhainesx4@al.com or 610-570-9166

Thank you!

Task Force

Bethany now has a Task Force to work on the Futuring Project. Serving are Eric Derr, Matt Miller, Lisa Nguyen, Dick Roberts, Sherri Gangewere and Corey Tancin. Please keep the Task Force in your prayers.

Bethlehem Emergency Shelter

Our Friends at Bethany!

Thank you so much for your recent donations for our Blessing Bag Project for BES. Because of additional donations, we no longer need some of the items. What we still are collecting follows: women/men deodorant and razors, shaving cream, toothbrushes and sanitary napkins.

Again, thank you for helping us to achieve success with this project!

Yours in Christ,
St. Thomas UCC

Pastor Vacation

Pastor Todd will be away this week from Monday through Friday. He will be back to lead us in our first fall service in the Sanctuary next Sunday. In case of a pastoral emergency please contact the office during posted hours or Debbie @ 484-358-3735. The Rev. Dennis Schapell is covering for him.

THIS WEEK AT BETHANY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

10:45AM Worship in Fellowship Hall
followed by Indoor Picnic!

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18

8:00AM 12:00PM Office Hours
7PM Darts @ First UCC

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

8:00AM 12:00PM Office Hours

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20

5:30PM Handbell Rehearsal
7PM Chancel Choir Rehearsal

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 21

8:00AM 12:00PM Office Hours

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

10:45AM Worship with us as we return to
the sanctuary.

