

Kindness Matters

As I write this short message for our newsletter, I'm wearing a t-shirt that I purchased last summer to support a family business called 'Be Kind to Everyone.' My shirt's message? 'Together we can make the world a kinder place.' This Georgia based company that sells t-shirts and socks was started in a basement to provide meaningful employment for a young woman with Autism. The goal for this family business was that Jordyn would sell 40 t-shirts to family and friends over the course of the summer. Jordyn's quite the saleswoman; the business moved out of the basement and now occupies a building with over 5,500 square feet.

Jordyn's situation tells of a common challenge. Differences too easily leave people on the margins and as last Sunday's text from Luke pointed out, we need to get better at 'seeing' the need in our midst and then, inspired by God's love, respond to it.

Jesus mastered seeing people on the margins: the woman at the well, the leper in need of healing, the demoniac living amongst the tombs come to mind. In each of these instances, Jesus responded to need and people experience life renewed. I'm wondering how you're doing today and if you, too, would benefit from experiencing renewal. When I'm feeling unsettled (anxious, tired, overwhelmed, grief-stricken) I find prayer is a help. I close my eyes and take a few slow, deep breaths. I imagine Jesus coming to me and I pray, "Dear God, Take this from me. I cannot bear it alone." After offering this prayer, while taking a few more slow, deep breaths, I imagine the burden leaving my body as Jesus takes it upon his. This prayerful act becomes more effective in offering renewal when I truly let Jesus take the burden upon himself. You might want to give this a try and I'm happy to meet with you if you'd like some help entering into this spiritual practice.

It's important to 'see' what's happening around us. The USDA recently announced it would end regular surveys that monitor food insecurity in our nation. Evidence of need will be erased. Those in need will be more easily ignored. Saint Vincent de Paul said, "Go to the poor...you will find God." St. Vincent believed that justice is relational – rooted in mercy, solidarity and presence. Relationship begins by seeing.

I like to wear my kindness t-shirt with a logo on one sleeve that acknowledges it as a 'Spectrum Design' and it's especially fun when I see other people wearing theirs. On those occasions, we reach out to one another with a smile and nod. A t-shirt helping us 'see' one another. This month, as we make our way more fully into autumn and anticipate the holiday season that will soon be on display in stores, let's commit to 'seeing' others especially those folks outside our circle of friends and neighbors. A smile and nod may be all it takes to brighten someone's day but to take this a bit farther, ask someone how they are doing and be ready to really listen. Seeing others, hearing from them is to bring God's love close.

Grace and peace, Lori
563.380.8187

The photo shows Jordyn wearing one of her shirts.
Visit her shop at <https://bekindtoeveryone.com>.



Dear friends of Bethel Presbyterian Church,

Disasters often strike without warning, but thanks to your generous contribution, Church World Service will be better prepared to provide emergency assistance when and where it is needed.

Your support and your foresight mean that we can quickly and effectively get supplies into the hands of the people who need them after a crisis. These supplies include:

- CWS Blankets
- CWS Emergency Cleanup Buckets
- CWS Hygiene Kits
- CWS School Kits
- Emergency Food Packages

Your gift also helps to:

- provide long-term recovery assistance
- assist communities to rebuild and to mitigate future disasters

Rebuilding from a disaster is tough, but we have repeatedly witnessed the resilience and strength of the women, men and children who rise in the wake of an emergency. I am so moved by your generosity as you join us in standing with them and providing hope. Thank you.

May God bless you for your support,

Rick Santos
President and CEO
Church World Service

To stay informed on how you're helping people in need, at home and around the world, visit cwsglobal.org and follow us on **Facebook**, **Instagram**, and **Twitter**.



Gift Receipt

Date of Gift: August 25, 2025
Amount: \$66.00
Purpose: Kit Shipping

Bethel Presbyterian Church
208 N Vine St
West Union, IA 52175-1226

Thank you!

No goods or services were provided in exchange for this gift; therefore, your gifts to Church World Service are tax deductible as allowed by law. Please keep this receipt for your records.

Church World Service
P.O. Box 968
28606 Phillips Street
Elkhart, IN 46515
800-297-1516
888-297-2767
cwsglobal.org
info@cwsglobal.org

Session took the following action at their 07 September meeting:

- Opened with devotion and prayer led by Dawn Jacobsen;
- Shared with each other our Joys and Concerns;
- Approved minutes from Session meeting on 10 August 2025;
- Received Treasurer's Reports for August 2025;
- Noted the baptism of Charlotte Ann Post on 31 August 2025;
- Discussed "Comments on Organization" document from the Session Manual and asked all ministry teams to meet and then report to Session at its November meeting;
- Approved an honorarium of \$100 for Sarah Updegraff Murray when she speaks on 19 October 2025;
- Discussed remodeling and utilization of the nursery for an exercise area but took no further action;
- Pastor Lori reported she will be attending a grant-writing workshop next week;
- Pastor Lori reported on the John Knox Presbytery (JKP) meeting held 16 August 2025 including highlights of General Assembly Co-Moderator Rev. Tony Larson's sermon *Scraping Bottom*. She also noted boundary training is being offered soon in LaCrosse for church leaders;
- Heard an update on plans for Sarah Updegraff Murray to speak after worship on 19 October. A light luncheon will be before and dessert after Sarah speaks. The event will be advertised inviting the community to attend;
- Appointed Congregational Care Team to be responsible for the light luncheon on 19 October 2025;
- Heard an update on JKP's Starfish Campaign to purchase unpaid medical debt and then eliminate it. Approved a pledge of \$1,000 plus matching dollar-for-dollar donations from members of the congregation up to another \$4,000;
- Discussed upcoming renewal of hazard and liability insurance plus billing for Workmen's' Comp. Team will be contacting Schumacher to fix the elevator;
- Distributed each ministry team's worksheets for 2026 budget;
- Approved recommendation from Administration team to hold a meeting of the Congregation on 26 October 2025 for the purpose of receiving the 2026 budget and electing the next class of Elders;
- Received minutes of Celebration Fund's meeting on 03 September 2025, which discussed reinvestment of time certificate of deposit funds;
- The meeting was closed with prayer led by Rev. Kleppe.



EXTENDED TABLE OFFERING

The gifts you bring to the Extended Table offering that are received on Communion Sunday are now supporting the Open Hands Food Pantry in West Union.

The extended table offering items requested for Communion Sunday, October 5, 2025, are: cake mixes, brownie mixes and frosting. They would always welcome gluten free items.

Thanks so much for your offerings to support Bethel's mission to reach out in our community!

This is one simple way we can share with those in need. We are called to be generous as God has been overwhelmingly generous to us!



CELEBRATIONS

Congratulations to our Bethel family members as they celebrate birthdays and anniversaries this month!

- OCT 3- Martha Bartenhagen
Stacie Baumler Gorkow
Chad Schroyer
- OCT 4- Dianne Crandall
- OCT 6- Rick & Chris Thompson (A)
- OCT 9- Mark Bostrom
- OCT 11- Ken Popenhagen
Kris and Corey Moser (A)
- OCT 20- Pastor Lori & Gregg (A)
- OCT 23- Carrie Lee
- OCT 30- Nancy Davies



Sewing Circle will meet on Thursday, October 9th and 23rd, at 9:30 until approximately 3:30.



Committed to
nurturing faith,
supporting mission,
working for justice,
and building community.



Members and friends of Bethel who seek healing and wholeness in their lives are kept in prayer.

Together we are remembering: Cathy Bemiss, Teri Brockway, Don Durscher and family, Sarah Updegraff Murray, Kirk Bruso, baby McCoy, and Rose Marie Knight (Julie Larsen's mom).

Good Samaritan Center - Peggi Pape
Stoney Brook - Kate Ewing, Kathy Meyer
Eastern Star Decorah - Doyle Gorden
Ossian Care Center - Cindy Barness
Maple Crest - Tex Heyer



LAYLEADERS

- 05 Robin Bostrom
- 12 Stephen Bartenhagen
- 19
- 26

POWER POINT

- 05 Robin Bostrom
- 12 Dave Aanes
- 19 Carrie Lee
- 26 Julie Aanes

FELLOWSHIP TREATS

- 05 Robin Bostrom
- 12 Gregg/Lori Kleppe
- 19 Lunch/Dessert
Provided/Sarah Speaks
- 26 Harvest Home Potluck

COMMUNION

Communion will be served
on Sunday, October 5.
Mark Bostrom and Ken
Popenhagen will be servers.



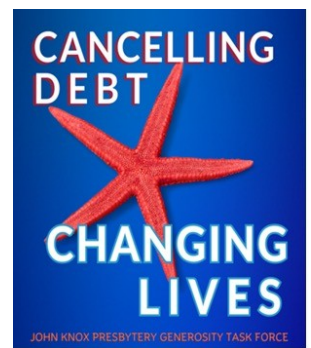
The Starfish Campaign is our presbytery-wide fundraising ministry to cancel medical debt for as many families as we can. The program is administered by JKP's Generosity Task Force. One of the questions the task force gets quite often is, "Why is it called the Starfish Campaign?"

Well --- It parallels this simple yet profound story. *A young boy is throwing starfish, stranded on the beach, back into the water. Without the boy's help, the starfish will die. A man confronts the boy with the fact that there must be thousands of starfish needing help. The boy can't possibly make a difference. Then the boy surprises the man and tells him, as he tosses another starfish into the water, "I made a difference to that one!"*

John Knox Presbytery raises money to cancel medical debt because we believe in abundance, not scarcity. Scarcity tries to convince us we don't have enough. Since we lack the resources to remove all of the estimated \$220 billion of medical debt out there, scarcity would have us believe we can't make a difference. Abundance reminds us what we have. Working together, we can change the lives of thousands of families struggling under a burden many think they will never overcome.

Being able to partner with Undue Medical Debt has made a huge difference. They purchase large bundles of medical debt for pennies on the dollar. The dollars we send them are able to grow significantly. Each dollar we send does the work of at least \$100. Amazing! Because of Undue's skill in understanding the medical debt industry, even a seemingly small contribution of \$10 will wipe out at least \$1,000!

For its part, members of Bethel have contributed \$10,810 to the campaign over the last three years, which has been used to eliminate nearly \$1.4 million of medical debt. We will again participate in John Knox Presbytery's fundraising effort, which has already begun and will culminate on Sunday, October 19. For this year's campaign, Session has pledged \$1,000 to the effort and will match dollar-for-dollar contributions by this congregation up to another \$4,000. Together we can make a difference for so many people and live out our commitment as a Matthew 25 church!



Lima Leaf Day is Sunday Oct 5

Serving lunch of Pork Loin sandwiches, Maidrites, Hot Dogs, Baked Beans, Coleslaw, Homemade Pie & Ice Cream from 11am to 2pm. Free will donation. Seating inside the church and picnic tables outside. Outside vendors, children's games, barrel train rides and a cake walk.

Beautiful quilt drawing at 2:30pm, tickets available from Pat Baumler. Need not be present to win.

Proceeds go to support the Lima Church and Cemetery.

A fun day for everyone!!!



Bethel Presbyterian Church
invites you to join us for...

~ Christmas Eve in a Barn ~



December 24, 2025 @ 5:30pm

Rustic Chic Events Center
(renovated Gibbs barn)

**Join us for hearing the story of Jesus's birth,
animals, singing carols, special music,
and sharing the Light of Christ together.**

**THIS SUMMER, THE OPEN HANDS
FOOD PANTRY HAS WORKED TO
FEED LOCAL FAMILIES AND
INDIVIDUALS:**



June 1, 2025 - August 31, 2025

620 households served
1,396 individuals served
419 children ages 0 - 17 years served
38% households receiving SNAP

**YOUR HELP IS NEEDED TO CONTINUE THIS SUPPORT.
CONSIDER PROVIDING A FINANCIAL DONATION OR YOUR
TIME. CONTACT US TO FIND OUT MORE:
563-422-2150**



**These 39 items were shipped to
Knitting4Peace on August 21, 2024**



**Diaconate will meet
October 13 at 9:30.
Karen Schmitz will be hosting.**





Harvest Home Sunday is Sunday, October 26th

On Harvest Home Sunday we will honor all new and existing 50 Year and 75 Year Members. Congratulations, and thank you for the many years of dedication and service to Bethel Presbyterian Church. Our new 50 year member this year is Patti Pape.

There will be a potluck dinner following worship. Our new 50 member, Peggi Pape is our guest. Please bring your favorite dish to pass. Table service and beverage will be furnished. Let's enjoy the fellowship of this meal together.

A letter will be mailed to all 50 Year members soon.

Those being honored are:

75 Year Members

Donald Durscher
Katherine Ewing
Tex Heyer

50 Year Members

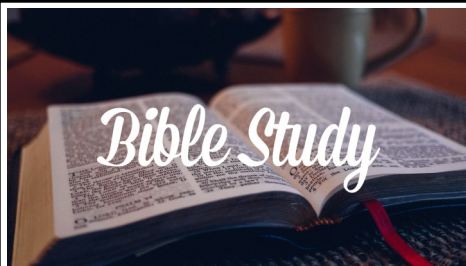
Julie Aanes	Pat Baumler	Cathy Bemiss
Dianne Crandall	Nancy Dunt	John O. Falb
Lois Franzen	Doyle Gorden	Jim Grimes
Dolores Jacobsen	Kathy Meyer	Roderic Miller
Patti Pape	LeAnn Popenhagen	Karen Schmitz
Darwin Schrage	Michael Schroyer	Jim Updegraff
Sue Updegraff		



*Indicates the new members.

Devotionals, Study Bibles and More

A small collection of gently used books has been donated and are available on a table in the library. See something you'd like? It's yours to enjoy! The photos show only a few of the books available.



We would like to invite you to the women's bible study. It is held at Stoney Brook on October 16th at 10:00 a.m. The topic is: Environmental Justice. The main idea is: We protect the created world we share and need from environmental degradation and destruction.

We will receive the Peace and Global Witness Offering on Sunday, October 5, which is also the day we celebrate World Communion Sunday and **Christ's peace extended through all creation**. As we come together with thousands of other Presbyterians that day, we are reminded of the strength we have as a worldwide church. Working together, we are assured of Christ's peace and that we can accomplish ministries which seek to reverse injustice and quell conflict around the world.

We celebrate that we are connected, we are loved, and we are not alone. We worship together and are fed from Scripture and at Christ's table of peace. Extending the peace of Christ is part of an active, engaged faith - a witness of what it means for us to be the church, together.

Peace is active, not passive

Peace is doing, not waiting

As we work to share Christ's peace with one another, let's have that peace with those beyond our doors, beyond our communities, and beyond our borders. The Peace and Global Witness Offering provides the tools and resources for us as we join as active participants at all times, and in all ways. The 25% Bethel kept for local missions in 2024 and 2025 was used to support the TigerHawk Summer Meal Program.

Check out a two-minute video about the offering at <https://vimeo.com/1097925528?fl=pl&fe=sh>

We are there.

The Peace & Global Witness Offering offers light to those in the shadows and guides us all into the ways of peace. We come together to promote the peace of Christ by addressing systems of injustice in our own communities and around the world.



Please give what you can.

IF WE ALL DO A LITTLE, IT ADDS UP TO A LOT.

Thank you!

House (Church) cleaning. Our clean out was a success!!

There are a few treasures for the taking on tables in the fellowship area and in the glass entryway. Parishioners have first dibs on or before October 5th. On October 6th, items are going to be displayed outside and on Bethel's Facebook page for the general public. On October 15th everything will be disposed of. Items include:

Doors	stain glass window	8' wooden coat rack on wheels
Pictures	picture frames	home décor
plastic ware	napkins	quilt stand without slats
Books	Christmas-tree stand	various types of chairs
outdoor wood and metal bench	many more items	

Everything is free for the taking - - donations are always welcome, though!

The Worship Ministry Team would like to invite our Bethel Congregation to participate in our "Give *Digital* Thanks" video during November. Send us a photo of what you are thankful for with a one or two word caption. We love hearing from our Bethel family and this video is so enjoyable for everyone because it is created by YOU! What a great way to stay connected with our extended church family. ***What are you thankful for?***

Send your photo to bethelpresbych@q.com

If you don't use email, bring a photo to the church office to scan.

The Worship Ministry Team



Noisy Bucket offering for August was \$53.29.

It will be collected again October 26th.

Thank you for your contributions to this ministry.

Our VISION—

*Our Vision is for this Body of Christ to be a Community of Faith called...
Bethel—A **people** and a place where God is made known!*

"Hope Is A Strategy"

Bethel Presbyterian Church will welcome West Union native

Sarah Updegraff Murray on Sunday, October 19th. Sarah experienced a devastating accident 16 months ago that changed her life forever. Since that time, she has been leaning on hope, relationships, and blessing to help her gain strength each day and give back to her community. Please join us to hear Sarah's incredible journey and engage in conversation with her.

A light lunch will be served following our regular 10:00 am worship service. Conversation with Sarah will begin approximately 11:30 am.

All visitors are welcome!

October 2025

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1	2	3	4
5 Worship 10:00 w/ the Lord's Supper Fellowship	6	7	8	9 Sewing Circle 9:30-3 Lori Good Sam	10	11
12 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Session	13 9:30 Diaconate	14	15	16 Women's Bible Study 10:00 Stoney Brook	17	18
19 Worship 10:00 Fellowship Sarah Updegraff Murray Speaks	20	21	22	23 Sewing Circle 9:30-3	24	25
26 Worship 10:00 w/ Noisy Bucket Harvest Home Fellowship	27	28	29	30	31	

Bethel Presbyterian Church
208 N. Vine Street
P.O. Box 473
West Union, IA 52175