

# 2023 ANNUAL REPORT

## BETHEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Our vision is to be *united* in  
seeking God's will and serving all people.

# 2023 Annual Report – Bethel United Church of Christ

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**Bethel United Church of Christ**  
**Annual Congregational Meeting Minutes:**  
**January 29, 2023**

**Moderator:** Joan English, Council President

**Present:** a quorum of the congregation was present

**Purpose:** The purpose of the annual meeting was to approve prior minutes, elect members to the Leadership Council, present the annual report, and approve a proposed 2023 budget.

**Call to Order:** At 12:05 PM Joan English called the meeting to order and Reverend Sam Buehrer gave an opening prayer.

**Approval of minutes:**

- January 2022: No changes or questions were noted on the notes. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Barry Burleigh, seconded by Bruce Lawson and passed unanimously by voice vote.
- October 2022: A correction on the third bullet point is needed to correct the name to Vann Atter. A motion was made by Bruce to approve the minutes with the noted spelling correction. The motion was seconded by Leesa Scales and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Leadership Council Nominations**

- Proposed Candidates:
  - Leesa Scales – President
  - Charlie Haller – Member At-Large
  - Jenny Webster – Member At-Large
- A motion to approve the proposed Leadership Council candidates was made by Linda Garrett and seconded by Cindy Montgomery. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote.

**Team Reports & Discussion**

- Finance: Scott reviewed the 2023 annual budget.
  - Question from Carmen Mazick regarding how the \$244k from the Larry Appman bequeathal had been allocated.
    - \$25k to Habitat Home for the benefit of a veteran.
    - \$60k to the Endowment fund
    - Balance to Asset/Liability fund
  - Question from Carmen Mazick regarding why the Helping Hand Fund was negative. Reverend Sam explained that the fund was used twice to help cover an operating expense on short notice and several financial requests were made in December.
  - The Bethel Buddies budget is based on the enrollment of 32 students, although the program can accommodate 34. The preschool is likely to get an Indiana grant in 2023, but it has not received it yet. If it does, there is a plan to use those monies in part to cover the preschool salaries and payroll and Bethel will “charge” the preschool for rent and administrative fees. There was considerable expense getting the preschool going and this plan is contingent on the preschool showing a profit.
  - Scott Scales made a motion to approve the budget. It was seconded and the motion passed unanimously by voice vote.
- Pastor’s Report:
  - The preschool staffing has settled and we have been blessed with some great staff.
  - The church’s ministries are diverse and aid with our Mission. For the choir ministry, we are

working on a youth choir and are in conversations with Stockwell Elementary.

- In stepping down as Council President, Joan English expressed her thanks to Sam, the Leadership Teams and Staff of Bethel for their hard work. She encouraged us to reach out to former members and seek out ways to save our environment.
- President elect, Leesa Scales expressed her and our thanks to Joan for providing such an excellent lunch and for her service on the Council. A donation in the amount of \$200 will be made in Joan's name to Habitat for Humanity.
- A motion to adjourn was made and seconded. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote in the affirmative and the meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM.

A closing prayer was given by Reverend Sam.

Respectfully submitted,

Donna Herum

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**Bethel United Church of Christ**  
**Fall Congregational Meeting Minutes:**  
**November 19, 2023**

**Moderator:** Leesa Scales, Council President

**Present:** a quorum of the congregation was present

**Purpose:** Discuss Leadership Council voting timing and provide an update on the Convergence Process.

**Call to Order:** At 11:25 AM Leesa Scales called the meeting to order.

**Opening Remarks:** Leesa expressed her deep appreciation for the food donations for the Thanksgiving baskets. The church will be sponsoring gifts for some families in need at Christmas. She also reminded the congregation about the Hanging of the Greens on November 27.

**Leadership Council:** Voting on Board membership will be held at January's Congregational Meeting, at a date to be announced. A question regarding whether Bethel needs both fall and spring congregational meetings was raised. If two meetings are no longer needed, Scott Scales pointed out that the Bethel Bylaws would need to be changed.

**Convergence Team Update:** Greg Carlson, our consultant from Convergence visited Bethel this fall to meet with members, provide an update to the congregation on the survey results and conduct training. The Bethel Convergence Team has interviewed approximately 15 leaders in the community including Mayor Winnecke and key leaders at the Evansville Housing Authority, Habitat for Humanity, Evansville City Council to document what they see as needs in our community. The team will narrow down that list which will then be shared with the congregation. A set of 3-5 options will be presented at the January Congregational Meeting with the goal to get input from the congregation on where we want to put our efforts.

**Questions:** The only question raised was from Scott Scales regarding the bylaws, as noted above.

**Closing:** A closing prayer was given by Leesa Scales and the meeting was adjourned at 11:45 AM.

Respectfully submitted, Donna Herum

## **LEAD PASTOR - Rev. Samuel Buehrer**

Where there is no vision, the people perish.” (Proverbs 29:18) Now that the worst of the pandemic was behind us, the leadership of the church decided to enter into a vision process to determine what “next direction” we might plan on since so much has changed over the past several years. We contracted with a company called Convergence to get help in this vision process. We began surveying the congregation in May and talking with various representatives from the surrounding area throughout the fall. Four key issues were identified for possible consideration.

1. The needs of Bethel Buddies and Stockwell Community,
2. Safety/Violence
3. Food Insecurities
4. Homelessness/Housing Issues

It is expected that through the vision process that the congregation will decide to focus its energies on one of these issues and make that issue a key part of its ministry as we move forward.

At the December meeting of the Leadership Council, the question was asked, “Where do you see Bethel UCC at its best?” It became very clear that many of the answers to that question centered around the times when Bethel was reaching beyond itself and including its neighbors in its ministries. These times include the larger ministries to children such as our preschool. It includes the ministry provided through our youth musical program, Dream Street Studio. It includes single events such as the Easter Egg Hunt, Trunk or Treat and Sunday morning worship when the children in the preschool program and their families joined us for worship at our Fall Roundup and our Christmas program. Other responses included filling the needs of some in our community through our outreach ministries to Stockwell Elementary School, United Charing Services and Habitat for Humanity to name a few. Included in this list is now a food ministry that serves several families in our preschool. Every week a food cart is restocked now because we learned that several of our preschool families are food insecure. These are but a few of the times mentioned when Bethel is at its best.

In the spring of the year we celebrated raising almost \$80,000 for Habitat for Humanity to fund a new home, preferably one for a veteran. We also opened up space for The Good Samaritan Home to use as they move through a time of change.

Over the course of the year we went through a significant change in staffing. For health reasons, our secretary, Melissa Conville, resigned. We then created the position of Office Administrator and Christy Woywood, our Financial Secretary stepped into that position. Two positions were eliminated largely due to financial constraints, the Program Director position and the Director of Youth Choir/Youth Theater. We also contracted out our custodial services. I am pleased to say that Bethel UCC is truly blessed with a great and dedicated staff.

We made numerous upgrades to the facility. These included replacing the gym roof, replacing the HVAC system in the educational wing, replacing sinks in the preschool bathrooms, adding additional cameras for safety reasons, replacing broken sewer pipes and changing the fencing configuration around the preschool playground.

All in all, 2023 has been a good year for Bethel UCC. I look forward to where God is leading us in 2024.

## MUSIC NOTES

The Sound of Music

We do hope you enjoy and get inspiration from the beautiful music offered by the Sanctuary and Bell Choirs, guest artists, soloists and resident pianists and singers.

We enjoy working on and presenting music for worship!!!

We lost several bell players this year due to moving out of town and other reasons, but were able to recruit several new members and now have a full complement of players.

We continue to have almost 20% of the worshipping congregation in Music Ministry, which is higher than lots of congregations in town.

I continue to teach music to the Pre-School and the congregation enjoys their presence 2 or 3 times a year!!!

I was able to move back to the original Music office this year and am enjoying the beautiful view of the courtyard.

I thank all of you for the continued support for Bethel's Music Ministry! We couldn't do it without all of you!!!

Cynthia Grassman

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## PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Dear Bethel Friends,

Let me begin by thanking everyone for the help and support of our various projects and initiatives this year. It takes all of us to keep our beautiful church and grounds functioning smoothly. From counting offerings to removing bushes in the yard, it is all necessary and very appreciated. Thank you!

As we move into a new year, I am very excited to see where our Convergence Visioning process takes us. I pray that we can be open to the discernment process and where God is leading us. All churches are evolving and their role in the community is ever changing. If we are to continue to be a thriving community, we will also need to evolve. Some of those changes are already taking place with our increased involvement in the Bethel Buddies Preschool, CAJE, and other mission work. Please get involved in these opportunities, ask questions about the visioning process, and pray for our church as we continue to seek out God's plan for Bethel.

Lastly, I pray for New Year blessings for all of us. May God bless us with health, challenges that help us grow, and time to enjoy with our loved ones.

Blessings,  
Leesa R. Scales  
Church Council President

## ADMINISTRATION TEAM

**Team Members: Scott A. Scales -Team Chair, Bruce Lawson, Kim Stevens, Frank Schultheis, Rev. Buehrer**

The Team met sporadically throughout the year and focused its attention on reviewing the church's expenditures as well as other various topics that arose during the year:

- With the bequest received in late 2022 from the Larry Appman estate, we finalized the balancing of the church's "Ameriprise Transfer Account" to match the church's "02 Liabilities"
- In March, we authorized the updating of our accounting software to QuickBooks Premier
- We also rewrote the church's reimbursement policy for church members requesting to be reimbursed for expenses incurred on behalf of the church
- In October, we rewrote the church's investment policy for the Endowment Account in order to provide greater clarity as to how the Endowment Account is to be invested and how income is taken

Respectfully submitted



Scott A. Scales

Admin Team Chair

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## BUILDING AND GROUNDS

My my, how can 12 months pass by so quickly? Your B & G Team of volunteers has remained quite busy in 2023 keeping the “Jewel of North Green River Road” polished. It takes a lot of elbow grease. I want to thank your very dedicated volunteer crew for their many hours of work:

- Fred Bullinger
- Donna & Richard Condi
- Phil Damm
- Bob English
- Bob Mangold
- Dan Patterson
- And our anchor that keeps us on track, Pastor Sam.

Our work never gets finished, there is always something that needs fixed, moved, installed, painted, replaced, removed, trimmed, planed, ...

We hope that you all appreciate the many things that we very eagerly do to keep Bethel the very beautiful “Jewel” that she is.

Barry Burleigh-Chair

## **EARLY CHILDHOOD COMMITTEE**

### **Early Childhood Committee**

Sharon Lawson-President

Louella Komives-Member

Frank Schultheis-Member

Kimberly Charles-Staff Director (filling in as Committee secretary until the secretary has been chosen)

Denise Carter-Preschool Director

Rev. Sam Buehrer-Lead Pastor

The Early Childhood Committee is very pleased to report that we have had a very productive year. We are thankful for the support and connection with volunteers and the congregation. We remain a Level 3 registered preschool ministry with VCP Certification. VCP certification assures and documents that we have met all licensing requirements needed to receive CCDF Vouchers and On My Way Pre-K. The preschool provides services to the families and children in our community as well as employment opportunities.

### **We are happy to share a few of the many updates, improvements and events that have taken place:**

- ▽ Relocation of the playground fence to provide safety and security of the students and staff.
- ▽ Purchase and installation of a washer and dryer.
- ▽ Purchase and installation of a television at the entrance of the preschool hall to be used for communication with staff, families and students.
- ▽ Donations of clothing for students who may have had an accident and need a change of clothing. With the donations, we can provide clothing to families who are in need of items for their child.
- ▽ Holiday giving mission: families in need were provided clothing, small gifts and food during the holiday season. The preschool collected macaroni and cheese for the giving ministry.
- ▽ “Pats Pantry” Our families have been blessed with an opportunity to receive food items as they leave preschool for the day. Joan English has graciously created this food giving fund and supplies a small cart with food and necessities for families in need.
- ▽ Sharon Lawson, Joan English and Leesa Scales have provided the staff with treats. These small acts of kindness show appreciation to the preschool staff and are very much appreciated.
- ▽ Sharon and Leesa have also opened the coffee bar for our families the last Friday of each month. Families are greeted and offered coffee along with a small breakfast food item when they bring their child to school. This is a great way to connect our families to the church.
- ▽ Preschool children and families enjoyed joining the congregation to share a few songs and enjoy food and fellowship during Rally Day and Christmas Wassail. Preschoolers also enjoyed participating in the Halloween fun and games provided by the church. \*Trunk or Treat.
- ▽ Preschool special activities, special guest visits and photos are now appearing in congregation newsletters, emails and weekly notifications. Volunteers are always appreciated; the children and families enjoy the extracurricular activities.
- ▽ All staff members are trained in additional Child Abuse & Neglect certifications: Darkness to Light and Stewardship of Children. All students ages 4-5 with family permission will attend Bodies & Boundaries each year presented by Holly’s House.

**Respectfully Submitted, Denise Carter-Preschool Director-Early Childhood Committee**



## FAITH FORMATION

We want to thank all the many volunteers that have helped with Children's Messages, Children Church, Youth Events, the Easter Egg Hunt, VBS, Rally Day, and Trunk or Treat!

With your help our 2 major community events, the Egg Hunt and Trunk or Treat, were enjoyed by a very well attended number of children and families. We look forward to building on these events next year as an opportunity to reach out to our neighbors.

The Youth most recently enjoyed a bonfire cookout in October and Christmas shopping for needy families and eating tacos in December.

The Book Club continued to meet on Sunday mornings as well as Pastor Sam offering several different Bible studies throughout the year.

We especially enjoyed sharing our Western Roundup Rally Day with Bethel Buddies teachers and families. A great turnout had us listening to the kids singing during church and sharing a meal and games after. Bethel was also graced with their presence on Wassail Sunday by singing in church and participating in telling the Christmas Manger story complete with lamb, cow, and angel costumes! A fun way to end the year.

We welcome anyone interested in the various ways of developing Faith to join us – really, *please*

Sharon Lawson, Leesa Scales, Joan

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## MISSION TEAM

Members: Suzanne Farney, Judy and Frank Schultheis, Kathy Parker, Tonya Brantley

Providing basketballs for those participating in the gym programs.

Continuing to support ASP with the second Sunday donations.

Working towards accumulating funds for building a Habitat Home that honors veterans. Larry Appman left a bequest in his estate for that purpose - he was a veteran and the building will be in his honor. The local VFW organizations have contributed to the fund.

We gave \$750 to CAJE as well as well as the fundraiser for Habitat "Walking For Dreams."

Our Mission for May was Strengthen the Church - as well as asking for volunteers to operate a soup kitchen 2or 3 times a year.

We continue to support Stockwell with our "Christmas in July" school supplies donations. We asked the Girl Scout troop meeting at the church to help with the inventory.

In August donations were sent to the Nigerian School which is a project of Women of IKC conference. The goal they hoped to reach was to finish the school before Sarah Magari's retirement.

Continuing to add to our "Helping Hands" fund for local families as well as anyone in our own congregation.

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Designated funds for the Maui fire and the weekly bulletin will continue to post the information regarding donations.

Discussion around disaster areas and how we can help -and to use the cause as a way for our congregation to work together as a social event.

Due to the changes at Good Samaritan -the \$1,000 normally given the Good Sam was sent to UCS via the Vision Team - perhaps for a food pantry/program.

The money could possibility be used for a new members/visitors/get-acquainted meals.

We continue to have great success with our 4 Little Free Libraries as well as our Bethel Buddies located in the pews to be used for comfort to anyone one experiencing difficulty in their life.

There wa \$1,120 left in our annual budget and we used \$500 to provide a small food pantry for the pre-school families to take advantage of.

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### **STOCKWELL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL/BETHEL UCC PARTERSHIP**

Bethel's partnership with Stockwell Elementary School began in the summer of 2015 with our first collection of school supplies as part of our Christmas in July celebration. Now in the middle of our 9th school year of support, the relationship is well established. Principal Danielle Owen and teacher Ms. Allison Shepherd have come to know us and readily call on us to help at school events and also with student emergency needs.

The calendar year of 2023 includes the spring semester of the 2022-23 school year and the fall semester of the 2023-24 school year. In April during the week of the Book Fair, 5 volunteers helped students find good books to purchase. Later in the month 5 of us helped with refreshments and crafts at the Daddy/Daughter Dance. That was an evening to remember! Beautiful young ladies and their equally spruced up dads had the time of their lives dancing to music that everyone enjoyed! The Mother/Son Paint Night in May was also very popular and well attended. Four of us passed out refreshments. The school year ended with 2 of us helping outside at Field Day during the last week of school.

During the summer vacation we continued to keep Stockwell in mind. The congregation generously contributed school supplies and money during the 5 Sundays of Christmas in July. The volunteers hosted the Ice Cream Social after worship one Sunday with over 50 people attending, including Ms. Owen and Ms. Shepherd and her family.

As staff returned to school for the fall semester, Bethel volunteers helped teachers and the office prepare for the Open House. On 6 different Wednesdays throughout the fall we helped check in parents who came to have lunch with their children. The annual Family Movie Night took place in September with a large crowd and beautiful weather. Seven of us popped endless bags of popcorn and sold refreshments. The Grand Art Show in October was a very busy evening for students, grandparents and 7 volunteers. A new event, Fall Family Fun Night on the Friday following Halloween was lots of fun with games in the gym and a colorful carved pumpkin walk in the courtyard. Four volunteers sold tickets and ran the bingo game. We also donated many boxes of snack cakes as prizes for the cake walk. The week of Thanksgiving Bethel delivered baskets of food and paper goods for 6 Stockwell families. During the week of the Santa Shop 6 of us helped the students choose gifts and stay within their budget. We also provided Christmas for one Stockwell family.

Continued →

There are about 13 Bethelites who regularly volunteer to help at Stockwell events. Thank you for your dedication! Each one of you has been a loyal Stockwell supporter for years! Thank you to the congregation! You have supported our July school supply collection and November food basket collection generously since the beginning! At every event without fail, Ms. Owen, staff, PTA, parents and children thank us. Ms. Owen tells us we're a blessing!

### **Stock Up Stockwell, Christmas in July, 2023**

#### **Donated by congregation**

114 Ticonderoga #2 pencils	11 Art boxes
28 Jumbo Kindergarten Ticonderoga pencils	5 1-inch binders
33 Crayola 24-count crayons	29 Composition notebooks
19 Crayola colored pencils	7 Post-it notes
23 Black Expo dry-erase markers chisel tip	16 Kleenex
13 Clorox wipes	13 pens
11 glue sticks	27 folders
7 spiral notebooks	2 pkgs. Notebook paper

#### **Purchased with financial donations**

240 Ticonderoga #2 pencils	2 Art boxes
14 Jumbo Kindergarten Ticonderoga pencils	2 1-inch binders
9 Crayola 24-count crayons	59 Composition notebooks
5 Crayola colored pencils	3 Post-it notes
52 Black Expo dry-erase markers chisel tip	4 Kleenex
4 Clorox wipes	
Girls' briefs — packs of 14, sizes 4, 6, 8, 12, 14, 16	
Packs of 10, sizes 14, 16	
Boys' briefs — packs of 10, sizes XS, S, M, L, XL	

## DREAM STREET STUDIO

### January 2023 -

- Rehearsals for Studio Showcase
- Tri-State's Got Talent Auditions (Two Winners)
- Solo & Ensemble (Earned Gold)

### February 2023-

- Studio Showcase
- Singing Valentines/ Recording
- Tri-State's Got Talent Performance
- State Solo and Ensemble (Earned Gold)
- Field Trip-Fun Home-USA- (2 of our Cast Members were in this show)

### March 2023-

- Rehearsals for Easter Performance
- Music Video Recording + Creating
- Field Trip-Academy of Arts- The Lions of Trondheim (2 of our Cast Members were in this show)

### April 2023-

- Easter Performance at Lakeridge Community for over 100+ people in community
- Music Video Recording + Creating
- Opened "Dream Street Studio Uganda" in Kampala Uganda and sent USD to them for opening celebrations
- Auditions for Summer Musical
- Field Trip-Castle High School-PUFF'S (2 of our Cast Members were in this show)

### May 2023-

- Rehearsals for Summer Musical
- Music Video Release - Amazing Grace
- Studio Showcase
- Set Building
- Costume Making

### June 2023-

- Rehearsals for Summer Musical
- Set Building
- Costume Making

### July 2023-

- Set Building
- Costume Making
- Summer Musical "James and the Giant Peach"

- WIKY Radio Show Appearance
- Lip Sync Battle at Civic Theater (Winner)
- Vanderburgh County 4H Fair Talent Contest (Winner)
- 44 News Cast Appearance
- Hacienda Give Back Night
- Field Trip -Warrick Summer Musical-Mamma Mia (3 of our Cast Members were in this show)

### August 2023-

- Rehearsals for Showcase
- Indiana State Fair Talent Contest in Indianapolis (2nd Place)

### September 2023-

- Music Video Recording
- National Anthem Singing for Buddy Ball
- Cast Member accepted into University of Southern Indiana Theatre Program

### October 2023-

- Auditions for Christmas in Oz Musical
- Rehearsals begin
- Fall Festival Amateur Contest (Lots of Winners)
- Showcase
- Set Building
- Costume Making

### November 2023 -

- Rehearsals
- Nutcracker Rehearsals
- Field Trip: ELF The Musical- Castle High School (4 of our Cast Members were in this show)
- Set Building
- Costume Making

### December 2023-

- Winter Musical-Christmas in Oz
- Orange Leaf Give Back Day
- Studio Showcase
- The Nutcracker Performance at Victory Theater with Ballet Indiana
- Set Building
- Costume Making
- Lakeridge Community 2-hour Performance for over 100 people

## WORSHIP TEAM

Members of the team are Amy Carey, Charlie Haller, Gale Neidig, Shirley Mangold and Pat Stoltz.

This team functioned without a team leader this year, but we all worked together. When a job was asked to be done, everyone stepped up to help.

We started out the year with plans for the Christmas Eve, 2023 service. The members completed questionnaires about the time for the Christmas Eve service as it is on a Sunday. The time of 4:00 PM was decided by vote. For 2023, Advent was moved up one Sunday.

Rev Sam showed us the wine he makes. He suggested we use his wine for communion and it was approved. We now have a member, Leesa Scales, baking the bread and Rev Sam making the wine for communion. I think we are one of the few churches where members are providing the bread and wine for communion. We appreciate the time and effort of both of them in doing this.

The church office showed us the Signup Genius for ushers, greeters and liturgist to sign up to volunteer. This was used for several months but several people had problems accessing the system and it was decided it was not user friendly. Bethel is blessed with many volunteers who are always ready to help.

The Lenten & Easter services were meaningful and attended very well. On Palm Sunday our favorite donkey lead us into worship as we waived the palms. On Easter, an Egg hunt after service was well attended and enjoyed by the children and adults.

A small table to hold communion was set up in front of church with individual communion to be used by those who use the sanctuary for meditation during the week.

We now use paper name tags. Everyone is doing a good job in filling them out each Sunday. As COVID is getting stronger, in October we started using the air purifiers again.

Our last meeting of the year was on the day the church was decorated for Christmas. We appreciate the large number of volunteers who helped and the brave men who climbed the ladder to set up the tree. Everyone agreed the tree this year was one of the prettiest.

The Worship Team wishes to thank the staff, choir, bell choir, ushers, greeters, liturgists and everyone who made 2023 a very special year of worship at Bethel United Church of Christ.

## TO DO JUSTICE, LOVE MERCY, AND WALK HUMBLY WITH OUR GOD

The ministry of Bethel United Church reaches far beyond our doors. It enriches our community's life. It makes a difference in the lives of individuals and families. 2023 was a year of transformation and change for several of the ministries we share with others.

**CAJE:** Congregations Acting for Justice and Empowerment is in a reorganizing, building-up, increasing people power mode, with Yvonne Martin as new lead organizer. Building on years of work, we've helped accomplish a great deal: the city's affordable housing trust fund has received \$12 million, a dual diagnosis center for youth is opening; violent crime in the city is down, and the diversion center is open (see UCS). We will have two focus groups for 2024: housing and education. Rev. Buehrer is co-chair of CAJE; Barry Burleigh is on the board. We have 33 people on our Bethel Justice Network contact list.

**Good Samaritan:** The skilled nursing facility that Bethel helped found 60 years ago has been sold. The corporation composed of member churches is still very much in existence. Its current task is to discern the faithful use of the proceeds of the sale. There are 3 alternatives: to dissolve with the proceeds going to various philanthropic endeavors; to endow by supporting such entities overtime through the creation of a foundation; or to create a new charitable focus to serve emerging community needs. Meanwhile, the Good Samaritan office is in our building, the first room on the right when using the hall next to the gym. The current office is housed at Bethel UCC, 3029 North Green River, Evansville, IN 47715. Our good friend the Rev. Michael Erwin is the interim executive director.

**Habitat for Humanity:** We joined other United Churches and the Disciples of Christ to sponsor another Habitat home. This one is for Cameron H and her family! She is a tremendous young lady with a bright future. Now, she has a safe, decent and affordable place to lay her head at night! Even better news - there are 2 Habitat homes slated to be built in 2024 thanks to Bethel's and other UCC/DOC congregation's support!

**United Caring Services:** Bethel was instrumental in the formation of the city's only low-barrier homeless shelter. It offers lots of services: a day shelter, men's and women's night shelters, medical respite, the newly opened diversion center, white/red flag emergency shelter and low-income apartments. Va Cun became the executive director early in 2023; Cyrus Williams joined more recently as the development officer and volunteer coordinator. Sharon Hoffman and Debbie Wilson of our congregation are regular volunteers.

All this is in addition to providing facilities for other community groups. In addition to our congregation, Bethel Buddies Preschool and Dream Street Studio serve children, youth and families. Other building users include AA, a business networking and referral organization, and occasional users like scouts, volleyball teams, and those attending special events.

Decades ago, Bethel determined our mission as being united to seek and to serve God's people. We continue to do that whether in our facilities or beyond. God grant us the wisdom, courage, and energy to do that well into 2024 and beyond.

## PARISH RECORDS

<u>Baptisms</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Parents</u>
Gavin Dale Wininger	02/19/23	Chad & Jennifer Wininger
Clayton Gene Potts	10/22/23	Bobby & Jamessa Potts

<u>Deaths</u>	<u>Date of Death</u>	<u>New Members</u>
Lloyd Caldemeyer	01/10/23	Gene & Sharon Wells
Darlene Neidig	03/01/23	Steven & Janet Best
Warren McCullough	05/05/23	Betty Clark
Patti Coleman	06/20/23	Gil Himebaugh
Sue Kuykendoll	07/21/23	Julie Pyle
Charlie Marx	10/10/23	Pat Stoltz
Doris Glesige	12/05/23	Linda Hall
Nita Voorhees	12/31/23	

### Membership Report

Active Membership as of December 31, 2022 = 259  
 Member deaths = 8  
 Drops/Transfers = 0  
 New Members = 9  
 Active member as of December 31, 2023 = 260

<b>2023-2024 Teams</b>	<b>Terms ending Jan 2023</b>	<b>Terms ending Jan 2024</b>
<b>Leadership Council</b>		
President	Leesa Scales	
Vice President	Lori Glazer	
Secretary	Donna Herum	
Treasurer	Frank Schultheis	
At – Large	Barry Burleigh	
At – Large	Jennifer Webster	
At - Large	Charlie Haller	
Past President	Joan English	
<b>Administration Team</b>	Scott Scales (Chair)	
		Kim Stevens
		Bruce Lawson
<b>Congregational Development</b>	Letta Fraccaro (Chair)	
	Linda Williams	Sharon Hoffman
	Carolyn Stevens	Doris Burleigh
<b>Faith Formation</b>	Joan English (Chair)	
	Sharon Lawson	
	Leesa Scales	
<b>Missions</b>	Carmen Mazick (Chair)	

	Suzanne Farney	
		Frank Schultheis
		Judy Schultheis
<b>Worship and Pastoral Care</b>	Pat Stoltz (Acting Chair)	
	Shirley Mangold	Charlie Haller
	Amy Carey	
	Gale Neidig	
<b>Early Childhood Committee</b>	(Chair)	
	Frank Schulthies	
	Juli Schultheis	
	Sharon Wells	
	Louella Komuves	
	Denise Carter (Staff)	
	Kim Charles (Staff)	
<b>Building and Grounds</b>	Barry Burleigh	Bob Mangold
	Fred Bullinger	
	Donna Condi	
	Richard Condi	
	Phil Damm	
	Bob English	
	Dan Patterson	

**AD HOC OR COUNCIL/CONGREGATION FOCUSED COMMITTEES:**

**Nominating:** Leesa Scales; Frank Schultheis, Lori Glaser, Donna Herum

**Personnel:** Leesa Scales; Lori Glaser; Frank Schultheis; Donna Herum

**OTHER MINISTRIES:**

**Communion:** Pat Stoltz

**Kitchen:** Linda Hape

**Nine to Dine:** Debbie Wilson

**Outdoors:** Donna Condi

**Office Assistance:** Laurel Vaughn

**Prayer Chain:** Leesa Scales

**WIDER CHURCH/COMMUNITY DELEGATES AND REPRESENTATIVES:**

**Good Samaritan:** Rob Hartmann; Stephanie Weiner

**United Caring Services:** Brenda Phelps

**Indiana Kentucky Conference:** Sam Buehrer (Board of Directors)

**Evansville Tri-State Association Committee on Ministry;** Sam Buehrer



## TREASURER'S REPORT

Our finances are well managed between the leadership council, administration committee, Sam, and Christy in the office. There are many moving parts for Bethel's operation.

Contributions to the Operating Fund for 2023 were \$190,024. This was a decrease of about 11.6% from the previous year. This decrease was due to deaths, transfers and members moving out of town. The church received income from the endowment fund and trust funds totaling \$161,402. The total income to the Operating Fund was \$427,831 with expenses of \$415,695.

Income for the Bethel Buddies Preschool was \$316,001 with expenses \$308,777 for a net income of \$7,224. This program is running well and is helping many families.

Our Dream Street Studio was a good program, but not successful financially and we lost \$24,326. The church council voted to discontinue this program for now as of the end of 2023. We are looking for alternative funding sources in hopes of restarting the program.

Bethel has been blessed with a bequest from Larry Appman estate we received in 2022 of \$241,000 and we will receive another \$54,000.00 in 2024.

We should be proud of our budget this year. We have given \$44,686,00 to Missions plus an additional \$70,524 was given for special projects. This past year we replaced the roof in gym for \$56,400.00 The endowment fund increased \$227,843.00

We are blessed and are a blessing to a lot of people.

Frank Schultheis, Treasurer

**BETHEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
BALANCE SHEET  
AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2023**

	Dec 31, 23
<b>ASSETS</b>	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
01-1000 · Bank Accounts	
01-1010 · General Accounts	
01-1012 · Liberty FCU Cking	18,659.38
01-1014 · Liberty FCU Share	5.00
01-1016 · Petty Cash - Office	100.00
01-1018 · Due from (to) Helping Hnd Cking	-2,392.00
01-1021 · Ameriprise -Spec. Hold. - 5053	1,425.48
01-1022 · Ameriprise - Gen Trans - 5395	197,652.69
01-1024 · UCC Cornerstone Fund Account	3,044.51
01-1026 · Amazon Gift Cards	146.97
Total 01-1010 · General Accounts	218,642.03
01-1030 · Helping Hand Accounts	2,429.62
Total 01-1000 · Bank Accounts	221,071.65
01-2000 · Restricted Ameriprise Accounts	2,771,178.01
Total Checking/Savings	2,992,249.66
Other Current Assets	14,241.45
Total Current Assets	3,006,491.11
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	3,006,491.11
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	4,612.10
Other Current Liabilities	
02-1000 · Outreach Funds	34,389.30
02-2000 · Program Funds	1,093.03
02-3000 · Property Funds	24,184.57
02-4000 · Other Funds	125,474.75
02-5000 · Class Funds	1,079.43
02-6000 · Member Contrb Not Yet Specified	0.00
02-7000 · Payroll & Other Liabilities	6,983.97
02-9000 · Ameriprise Endowment Fund	2,771,178.01
Total Other Current Liabilities	2,964,383.06
Total Current Liabilities	2,968,995.16
Total Liabilities	2,968,995.16
Equity	37,495.95
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	3,006,491.11

**BETHEL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
PROFIT & LOSS  
JANUARY THROUGH DECEMBER 2023**

Jan - Dec 23

Ordinary Income/Expense		
Income		
04-0000 · Operating Income		
04-1000 · Contributions		
04-1004 · Commitments & Pledges	185,861.00	
04-1008 · Non-Pledged Giving	1,915.00	
04-1012 · Plate Offerings	1,945.75	
04-1099 · Other Contributions	303.10	
Total 04-1000 · Contributions	190,024.85	
04-2000 · Designated Giving	3,563.25	
04-3000 · Investment Income - Operating	227,522.53	
04-4000 · Building Use Income	4,885.75	
04-6000 · Miscellaneous Income	810.57	
Total 04-0000 · Operating Income	426,806.95	
05-1000 · Fund Giving	74,272.16	
05-2000 · Miscellaneous Income - Funds	4,300.00	
05-4000 · Class Giving	470.00	
05-6000 · Youth Choir Income	22,284.65	
05-9000 · Bethel Buddies Preschool Income	316,001.19	
Total Income	844,134.95	
Gross Profit	844,134.95	
Expense		
06-0000 · Operating Spending		
06-2000 · Administration - Stewardship	308.72	
06-3000 · Admin - Bldg & Grounds	88,574.68	
06-4000 · Administration - Office	10,686.66	
06-5000 · Congregational Development	6,744.69	
06-6000 · Faith Formation	1,347.41	
06-7000 · Missions/Benevolence	44,686.22	
06-8000 · Personnel	257,468.94	
06-9000 · Worship	9,833.55	
Total 06-0000 · Operating Spending	419,650.87	
07-0000 · Fund Spending	201,445.60	
08-1000 · Class Spending	750.00	
09-1000 · Bethel Buddies Preschool Exp	309,132.79	
10-1000 · Youth Choir Expenses	45,720.08	
Total Expense	976,699.34	
Net Ordinary Income	-132,564.39	
Other Income/Expense	-34,089.00	
Net Income	-166,653.39	

## 2023 BENEVOLENCE REPORT

### FROM 2023 BUDGET

Recipient	Amount
CAJE	\$ 530.00
Crop Walk	\$ 300.00
Eden Theological Seminary	\$ 1,000.00
Evansville TriState Association	\$ 500.00
Habitat for Humanity	\$ 750.00
Little Free Library	\$ 250.00
Our Church's Wider Mission	\$ 15,550.00
Seminary Support	\$ 750.00
Southern Poverty Law Center	\$ 250.00
UCC Christmas Fund	\$ 750.00
United Caring Services	\$ 750.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$21,380.00</b>

### SPECIAL OFFERINGS & DESIGNATED GIFTS

Recipient	Amount
CAJE	\$ 220.00
Habitat for Humanity*	\$ 71,120.64
Helping Hands	\$ 4,982.50
Neighbors in Need	\$ 350.00
One Great Hour of Sharing	\$ 545.00
Second Sunday (Good Sam. Van)	\$ 1,576.37
Stockwell Elementary	\$ 533.75
Strengthen the Church	\$ 145.00
Thanksgiving Baskets	\$ 634.41
UCC Christmas Fund	\$ 760.00
United Caring Services	\$ 945.00
Rev. Sarah-Nigeria Outreach	\$ 959.00
General Synod	\$ 1,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$ 82,551.67</b>

### BENEVOLENCE TOTAL

2023 Budget	\$21,380.00
Special Offerings/Designated Giving	\$82,551.67
 TOTAL Benevolence	 \$103,931.67

*\*All Funds were given for the Appman Build in 2023*

