



Sunday School 9:00 am
Worship 10:00 am

October 2026

You Asked, I Listened, and We've Already Started

At our recent leadership onboarding meeting, those gathered spoke honestly about their deepest longings for St. Bethlehem. You want this church to represent the Lord Jesus Christ in all his fullness, to be a place of hope in the community, and to grow in membership, youth participation, Vacation Bible School, and leadership. You also desire pastoral leadership that encourages unity, positive and honest attitudes, and faithful preaching.

What I Heard About St. Bethlehem

The group described St. Bethlehem as a welcoming church with a history of serving others and a desire to continue serving the community. You also recognized that the church sometimes has difficulty letting go of traditions. Traditions can keep us rooted, but we must remain open when the Holy Spirit calls us to learn, grow, or do something in a new way.

These longings will require prayer, planning, willing workers, and time—but we have already started.

We Have Already Started

One idea born from the onboarding group is our Sunday Morning Nugget, a brief opportunity to learn something about our faith, Methodist heritage, or church life.

I am also encouraged by the thoughtful questions people are asking: Why do we say the Apostles' Creed? How are Scriptures chosen for worship? Why do we do some of the things we do? Questions are not signs of weak faith. They are signs of spiritual curiosity.

In the coming months, I hope to offer opportunities for us to explore our Wesleyan beliefs, worship practices, leadership responsibilities, and how God has gifted each of us to serve. These opportunities will be open to everyone—not only officers or "church experts."

You Also Asked About Me

As a United Methodist pastor, I serve through the appointment process, so I cannot promise a specific number of years. I can say that I am fully present and intend to serve faithfully for as long as God and the appointive process place us together.

I began preaching in 2020 and have served as an appointed pastor since 2022, although God's call on my life began many years earlier. It took a long and winding journey for me to answer that call fully. I completed my Master of Divinity degree in 2024 and was commissioned as a provisional elder in June 2026.

When I am not working, I especially enjoy spending time with my six adult children, seven grandchildren, and my granddog whose name is Smalls—a cute, feisty pug with a personality much bigger than his name. I also enjoy music, playing the piano, quiet time, bargain hunting, and

classic Westerns—especially Gunsmoke and The Rifleman. Sometimes young Mark is the wisest person on the whole show!

God is already at work among us. So bring your questions, your gifts, and a heart ready to grow. We are not merely preserving St. Bethlehem's history. With God's help, we are preparing for its next faithful chapter.

Grace & Peace, Pastor Jackie

Prayer Requests

Continued prayers for the Neitzke family

Pam Barrett

Ann Irwin

Roberta Polk

Harriett Silvey

Kathy Beasley

Mary Meilcarek-Clark

Kitty Seay

Lucille Thompson

Randy Boyer

Kathi Parker

Alicia Dawn Siders

Birthdays

7th Sue Goodrich

13th Kathi Parker

Liturgists & Acolytes

Doyle Clark

Michael Bellamy

Adrian Jones

Sarah Clark

Andrew Clark

Annalea Waterhouse

Josh Waterhouse

Rosie Clark

2026 Open Table Leadership

Pastor: Rev. Jackie Gardner

Chair: Margaret Fisher

Finance: *VACANT*

Trustees: Doyle Clark

SPRC: Erin Jones

Lay Leader: Margaret Fisher

Lay Member to AC: Nita Heilman

Secretary: *VACANT*

Treasurer: Sarah Clark

From Our Leadership

From the desk of our Pastor:

As a reminder, St. Bethlehem's Charge Conference will be held this year on Thursday, November 19th at 6:30 pm.

Notes & Thoughts

From our Chancel and Handbell Choirs Leader:

I want to send a big thanks on behalf of the congregation and myself here at St. Bethlehem United Methodist Church for the ministry of our Chancel choir.

I realize that it takes a considerable amount of time and sacrifice to participate in this great ministry, yet I also know how rewarding it can be on a personal level, as well as the great blessing it is for the entire congregation.

We live in a world that is filled with talented and gifted people yet don't think of offering these gifts in service to the Lord. The choir members have chosen to do so by offering their singing voice in the Choir on a consistent basis, and I know the Lord is pleased.

The fellowship and fun we have together as a choir is very rewarding. Thank you for putting up with me and the demands and changes I make as your leader, and I appreciate each and every one of you but may not always show it.

Season changes are soon with cooler weather and Advent and Christmas just beyond the horizon and that means we will be starting on Thanksgiving and Christmas music very soon and will try to find a time that we can practice and ring handbells.

A big thank you to all for sharing your talent with and for all God's people.

Margaret Fisher

Special Events



Happy fall y'all! It's about to be the doorbell-ringing time of year for kiddos to dress up and ask for candy. Halloween falls on a Saturday this year, so many local trunk or treat events are happening the prior weekend and not on the day of. Taking that into consideration we will host a trunk-or-treat on Halloween (Saturday the 31st) at noon.

We will set up some games and activities around the parking lot (weather permitting) for additional fun. We will serve donated hotdogs, bagged chips, and chilled drinks to families and set out a donation jar/box for families that feel led to contribute for the church-provided food.

Please consider donating a bag or two of candy that we will use to refill trunks as needed. We may also bag some candy separately for prizes for the games/activities.

We anticipate the event lasting no more than 2 hours. Please see Sarah Clark for questions or donations. Thank you!

The United Women in Faith would like to invite our church members to participate in a loaded baked potato luncheon, our last money maker of the year, October 25, 2026, following our morning worship. We will have a loaded baked potato, coleslaw, drinks, and dessert for \$10 per person.

The money will be used to support our local mission projects: Loaves and Fishes; Urban Ministries; St. Bethlehem's FUEL program, Ann's Closet, and Helping Hand Fund; HOPE Pregnancy Center; Miriam's Promise; Manna Café; SAFE House; and Camp Rainbow. We also hope to be able to make Christmas goody bags for our elderly, homebound, and those living in Assisted Living and rehab facilities. We have already forwarded scholarship money to our National Mission Institution, Bethlehem Centers of Nashville and UMCOR.

Please plan to be in church and invite your family to come and eat with you following our worship service.

Margaret Fisher, President of the UWF



Upcoming Events

The St. B **Sewing Circle** meets on the second Monday of each month at 12:00 pm at rotating attendee locations. If you have any questions or wish to join the Sewing Circle, please contact Nita Heilman.

This month they meet: October 12th at the home of Nita Heilman



Ann's Closet would like to thank everyone who found it in their hearts to donate both monetarily and with food items last month. Because of you we're able to demonstrate Christ's love and be ambassadors to those that don't know His grace and abundant love. If you find yourself able to donate this month, we anticipate we will need boxed breakfast cereal and oatmeal. Again, thank you.

Ann's Closet is operational this month on: October 7th and 21st

FUEL is back up and running for the 2026-27 school year and we're currently providing food staples for 100 children at the St. Bethlehem Early Learning Center. If you'd like to participate, we meet most Wednesdays at 10:00 am during the school year. Please contact Nita Heilman for more information.



United
Women
in Faith

Ann Doris Circle Meeting: October 13th at 10:30 am

Night Circle Meeting: TBD

Join us for **BINGO** on Thursday, **October 1st, 15th, & 29th** from 10:30-11:30 am.

What better place to play BINGO than St. B. We usually meet on the third Thursday morning of each month and afterwards continue our fellowship and fun with a group lunch. Come join us for BINGO this month for a fun time and white elephant gift exchange.



Chair Exercises on Thursdays, **October 8th & 22nd** from 10:30-11:30 am.

A fun, gentle, and low-impact workout done completely from the comfort of a chair. You'll want to wear comfortable clothes and bring a water bottle but there's no prior experience or special gear necessary. Come stretch with us; we'd love to have you.

Join us for **Family Game Night** on **October 16th** at 6:00 pm

What a great way to spend an evening. Most of us play games while others are happy to sit around and talk. Regardless of your preference, we'd love to have you join in on the fun!

Mark your calendars for upcoming Game Nights

November 20
December 18th

January 15th
February 19th



[illegible]

And here's a blast from the past...



FALL

Word Search

N N R O C A O P J E A E I C G W J K E H
 Q U E G I K I I N I K P M U P F S L E E T
 S T K E F T G P X R C H I L L Y G J L S E
 E S N V E O I I E A F X V T M D O D Y K D
 P L E A V E S B H A Y B A L E A Y L A T I
 T S E S Z N O W R K I X N I Z M H R N X R
 E H W Q J T H S Q H S N U Z P Z K H N A Y
 M K O W C G J G C K Q N X M G V V S H P A
 B R L O P S T U N T S E H C N H X C F P H
 E X L H W Y B A Q K N I N H I Q I A Q L D
 R N A S X K A T G O P J V U V X L R R E O
 B Z H Q O H N V T B P E A I L M E X A Q
 N M L N F R U E U G S M Z D G F H C M E P
 G A E Z I A M F G O E E A P S G D R Z A V
 B O U D V B A O H T E J V V K S L O K Q X
 O R U T E W P O G B Q G Q R N S P W L C Q
 C E G R U V T T M E E T K W A O B C L L C
 D V O D M O B X T C W M N H H A I Z G H
 I O J S Y N A Q B T P B O T Q U I L T J
 C O Q T L L H H L Z N O L W Z J U O
 D L G C Y J L L X X J U K Z C C C R J W E

ACORN HARVEST
 APPLE HAY BALE
 AUTUMN HAYRIDE
 CHESTNUTS LEAVES
 CHILLY MAIZE
 CIDER NOVEMBER
 COBWEB NUTS
 FALL OCTOBER
 FOOTBALL PUMPKIN
 GOURD QUILT
 HALLOWEEN RAKE

DIRECTIONS:

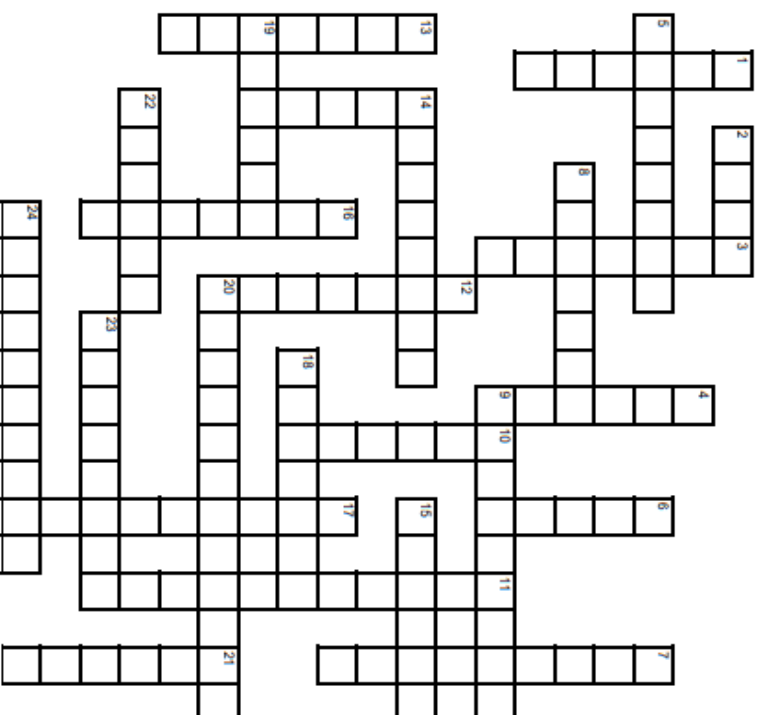
Find and circle the vocabulary words in the grid. Look for them in all directions including backwards and diagonally.

ACROSS

1. Flying mammals often associated with Halloween
2. Outfits worn to dress up as someone or something else
3. Tenth month of the year
4. Figure placed in a field to frighten away birds
5. Popular fall sport played with an oval-shaped ball
6. Colorful parts of trees that flutter to the ground in autumn
7. Fall outing that usually involves riding on a wagon
8. Season that comes between summer and winter
9. Halloween phrase children say when asking for candy
10. Hard-shelled fall fruits often used as fall decorations
11. Orange fall fruits often carved into jack-o'-lanterns
12. Fall tradition that welcomes former students back to a school

DOWN

1. Slightly scary or mysterious
2. Warm piece of clothing worn over the upper body
3. Nuts that grow on oak trees
4. Fall drink traditionally made from apples
5. October 31 holiday known for costumes and trick-or-treating
6. A little cold, like many October mornings
7. Tart red berries harvested during the fall



12. Gathering crops when they are ready
13. Place where fruit trees such as apple trees are grown
14. Thin coating of ice that can form on cold mornings
15. Large outdoor fire used for warmth or celebration
16. Seasonal journey made by many birds and other animals
21. Crisp fruits often picked at orchards in the fall

ACORNS, APPLES, AUTUMN, BATS, BON-
 FIRE, CHILLY, CIDER, COSTUMES, CRAN-
 BERRIES, FOOTBALL, FROST, GOURDS,
 HALLOWEEN, HARVEST, HAYRIDE, HOME-
 COMING, LEAVES, MIGRATION, OCTOBER,
 ORCHARD, PUMPKINS, SCARECROW,
 SPOOKY, SWEATER, TRICK OR TREAT

October 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
27 10am - Worship	28 6pm - Choir Practice	29 6:30pm - Cub Scout	30 10am - FUEL 7:30pm - N.A.	1 10:30am - BINGO 7:30pm - N.A.	2 6:30pm - Sea Scout Ship	3 6pm - N.A.
4 10am - Worship	5 6pm - Choir Practice	6 6:30pm - Cub Scout	7 10am - FUEL 11am - Ann's Closet 7:30pm - N.A.	8 10:30am - Chair Exercises 7:30pm - N.A.	9 6:30pm - Sea Scout Ship	10 6pm - N.A.
11 10am - Worship	12 Columbus Day Office Closed for Holiday 6pm - Choir Practice	13 10:30am - UWF Anne 6:30pm - Cub Scout	14 10am - FUEL 7:30pm - N.A.	15 10:30am - BINGO 7:30pm - N.A.	16 6pm - Family Game Night 6:30pm - Sea Scout Ship	17 6pm - N.A.
18 10am - Worship	19 6pm - Choir Practice	20 6:30pm - Cub Scout	21 10am - FUEL 11am - Ann's Closet 7:30pm - N.A.	22 10:30am - Chair Exercises 7:30pm - N.A.	23 6:30pm - Sea Scout Ship	24 10am - Guejardo Baby 4pm - N.A. Business 6pm - N.A.
25 10am - Worship	26 6pm - Choir Practice	27 6:30pm - Cub Scout	28 10am - FUEL 7:30pm - N.A.	29 10:30am - BINGO 7:30pm - N.A.	30 6:30pm - Sea Scout Ship	31 Halloween 11am - Cub Scout Award 12pm - Trunk or Treat 6pm - N.A.

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