

# The Ladder



A Publication of

## New Bethel UMC

November 2017

Glen Carbon's United Methodist Congregation

### WELCOME NEW MEMBER!

On Sunday, October 1, we welcomed **Merriann Lane** into our membership. She is a new resident of Edwardsville and transfers her membership to us from the Glasford United Methodist Church. Merriann usually attends the 8:15 am service and has jumped right into the activities here at New Bethel UMC, helping with last week's Trunk-or-Treat and taking the Disciple 1 class! Welcome, Merriann!

**Are you interested in becoming a member of the New Bethel United Methodist family? Turn to Page 3 to learn how!**

### November Sermons

Nov. 5 - *Saints, One and All*

**Read Matthew 5.1-12**

Nov. 12 - *In It, to Win It!*

**Read Joshua 24.1-25**

Nov. 19 - *Giving Thanks, with a Grateful Heart*

**Read Matthew 25.14-30**

Nov. 26 - *The Hope to Which We Are Called*

**Ephesians 1.15-23**

### Soup & Bread Dinner with Fall Country Market

Saturday, Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>, 11:00 - 3:00  
Fellowship Hall

**Dozens of Soup Varieties  
All You Can Eat**

Stop by the Country Market for:

- ❖ Homemade baked good
- ❖ Home décor
- ❖ Crafted gift items
- ❖ And more!

**Next Dinner: Saturday, January 27, 2018**

### CHRISTMAS CANTATA

*"Silent Was the Night"*

Experience the calm, quiet  
celebration of Christmas.

NBUMC Cantata  
will be shared  
Sunday, December 17,  
8:15 and 10:45am services

## Pastor's Pen:

I am quite fond of Elizabeth and Zechariah. Whenever I find myself waiting for an answer to prayer, I like to recall their story, told in the first chapter of Luke. ***In the time of Herod king of Judea there was a priest named Zechariah, who belonged to the priestly division of Abijah; his wife Elizabeth was also a descendant of Aaron. Both of them were righteous in the sight of God, observing all the Lord's commands and decrees blamelessly. But they were childless because Elizabeth was not able to conceive, and they were both very old...*** (Luke 1.5-7).

They were both faithful old servants of God who had never had children, despite their prayer requests. **Who among us has not struggled with unanswered prayer? Or lived with the longing of unmet desires? Or feared how our community would judge us? Or based our self-worth on the often compassionless standards of society?** All Christians struggle, from time to time, waiting for an answer to prayer. Elizabeth and Zechariah's story reminds us that life is often unfair, and even devout, obedient people harbor the tension of unanswered prayers and bear the weight of unmet desires. It's always good to know you're not alone...

Of course, we don't have to look in the Bible to find unfair situations. Many of us could probably name someone in a similar situation of having led an earnest and faithful life, and yet lived in the reality of unanswered prayer. Maybe you are a person in that situation right now!

- Perhaps you're waiting patiently to meet a fitting life partner,
- or to have that long-desired first child.
- or maybe you're waiting for vocational clarity that would allow you to use your God-given talents and passions.
- perhaps you are waiting for enough financial resources to go back to school or to meet pressing needs of our family.
- or maybe you're waiting for the doctor's call...

It would be perfectly normal and expected for feelings of anger, frustration, defeat, and resignation to creep into our spirits. Such feelings are not wrong and can be faithfully acknowledged... **But though our weeping and frustration may linger for the night, the peace and joy of life in Christ, should refresh us every morning.**

I'm sure Zechariah and Elizabeth felt some of those things. But what really connects with me is Zechariah's behavior. How difficult it must have been for both of them to maintain faith and hope, when year, after year, their prayer for a child went unanswered. How natural it would have been for Zechariah to have a crisis of faith - but this is not his reaction. Zechariah was of the priestly order and had commitments to his community. **Instead of having a meltdown or a pity party, the Bible tells us that Zechariah continued in his priestly duties. He attends to the duties of his faith while bearing the reality of his unanswered prayers.** It certainly must have felt to him at times, as if he was just going through the motions. And maybe he was. But there is still a connection to God in carrying out the duties of our faith, despite our circumstances. There is a profound faithfulness in that.

Yes, I admire Zechariah and Elizabeth. I deeply appreciate that their faith and devotion to God were not dependent on their circumstances or on God's answering their every prayer. Zechariah just kept doing his duty. And in doing so, he was keeping himself in good position to encounter God. And in fact, God showed up in an incredible way!

You and I can learn a lot from those who have gone before us. Their stories can sharpen, challenge, and remind us of who we are, in Christ. And when we stay close to Jesus, things work out very well for us. I heard a preacher on the radio last week who said, "Proximity to Christ fixes everything." Hmmm. I guess it does, at that.

In Grace and Peace,

Pastor Penny 

## **How do I join New Bethel UMC?**

You may become a part of the **New Bethel United Methodist family** in one of the following ways:

If you have never joined a church before, you may become a member by *profession of faith in Jesus Christ and by being baptized*. If you have already been baptized as an infant, child or as an adult in any Christian church, your baptism is recognized by New Bethel United Methodist Church. You will be asked to *uphold our church with your prayers, presence, gifts, service and witness*.



If you have been a member of another United Methodist church or another Christian denomination, you can transfer your membership to New Bethel UMC. Speak with Pastor Penny about any of these options and she will explain the process to you and schedule the date for you to join our fellowship. Contact her anytime on her cell (217-932-3115) or at the church office (618-288-5700).

## **TITHING CHALLENGE GOING WELL**

Thank you to those who have chosen to accept Pastor Penny's recent challenge to try tithing for 8 weeks: from the beginning of October through Thanksgiving Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. We had some low giving over the summer and we had not yet caught back up and were working at a deficit of around \$7500. Through your generous donations and faithful giving and tithing, we have made good progress toward eliminating that gap (which is now around \$ 2500). Thank you so much for your faithful support of New Bethel UMC's awesome ministries!

## **RECORD OF FAITHFULNESS**

**October Average Worship Attendance: 108**

**Sunday School Average Attendance: 30**

**Operating Budget: \$275,887**

**October Income = \$27,215**

**October Expenses = \$22,231**

**Annual Charge Conference**

**December 2, 2017 at 11am - First UMC, East Alton IL**



# Operation Christmas Child

A PROJECT of SAMARITAN'S PURSE

**Thank you everyone!** We have given out over 60 boxes to be packed for Operation Christmas Child. We have run out of the preprinted shoe boxes but Ken Gaines has wrapped some shoe boxes for us that are still available or you can wrap your own box. Make sure if you do wrap your own shoe box, wrap the top and bottom of the box separate because they will open and check the boxes at the distribution center. We did not want to order more this year because next year they are going to have available plastic boxes so we are excited to wait and get those so the children will have a nice sealed box to keep their things in.

**Please have all boxes back to the church by Sunday morning Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>, when we will dedicate the boxes in both services that morning.**

If you need ideas for gifts or information how to pack your box please visit our table in the church lobby or call Joanna Nuoffer @ 618-444-2174 or email @ [jonuoffer@msn.com](mailto:jonuoffer@msn.com). **Remember all gift items must be new and there is a list of items that cannot be included.** If you would like to help but do not want to pack a box you can help out with shipping costs for the crates to go over seas. It costs \$9 per box and you can write a check out to: Samaritan's Purse and put in the offering plate or leave in the Church office by Sunday Nov. 12<sup>th</sup>.

**Thank you again so much for all the wonderful gifts you are packing for children around the world that have very little.**

For more information you can go to: [samaritanspurse.org/occ](http://samaritanspurse.org/occ)

**Missions/Outreach Committee**

## **COMMITTEE MEETINGS**

**Finance Committee** will meet on Tuesday, November 14, at 6:30pm.

**Administrative Council** will meet on Tuesday, November 21, at 6:30pm.

## **HANGING OF THE GREENS**

**On Wednesday, November 29, we will meet at 5:30 to share a potluck dinner. After dinner (approx. 6:15 or so) we will begin decorating the church for the Christmas season. More hands makes it more fun, and quicker! Join us!**

## CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Our program this year is called, "Just a Little Christmas". It relies on narrators to tell most of the story, with small speaking parts for the other cast members. We're planning to have the program on **Sunday, December 17th at 6:30 pm** in the sanctuary, followed by the annual visit from the North Pole afterwards in the fellowship hall.

Here's the practice schedule:

**By November 12th:** please let Jenny Mulvihill know about your child's availability; we will send out e-mailed skit to all families...

**November 12:** read-through in Sunday school (10:15-10:30)

**November 19:** read-through in Sunday school (10:15-10:30)

**November 26:** practice after children's moment/late service downstairs

**December 3:** practice after children's moment/late service downstairs

**December 10:** practice after children's moment/late service downstairs

**December 16:** 9:30-10:30 A.M.: Dress Rehearsal

**December 17:** practice in Sunday School and/or late service

**December 17:** 6:30 P.M.: Program



## New Bethel UMC

### Thanksgiving Basket Ministry



Again this year, New Bethel UMC will be sharing Thanksgiving baskets (with all the fixings for a wonderful Thanksgiving meal) with 10 families in our neighborhood. If you know of someone who might be blessed by receiving one of our baskets, please speak with Pastor Penny. If you'd like to help us collect the food, assemble the baskets, and hand them out to the families, just visit the Thanksgiving table in the Lobby, beginning this Sunday, Nov. 5<sup>th</sup>, and take a slip or two which lists the items you need to purchase and return to the church by Sunday, November 19<sup>th</sup>! We will also need a few donations to purchase the turkeys. And you can sign up to help assemble the baskets after church on Nov. 19<sup>th</sup>, or you can sign up to help pass the baskets out on Monday, Nov. 20, at New Bethel UMC, from 1-4 p.m.

What a wonderful way to share the blessings of Thanksgiving with our neighbors!

**Basket Assembly - Sunday, Nov. 19 (right after 2nd service)**

**Basket Distribution - Monday, Nov. 20, 1-4 p.m.**

## ONGOING BIBLE STUDIES/GROUPS - join anytime!

**Wednesday night Youth Group Activities - 6 pm**

Fun youth activities, conversation, and Bible study for Middle School and High School students, led by our Youth Director, Judy Lee. New friends always welcome!

**Wednesday night Prayer Shawl Ministry - 6:30pm**

This is a neat ministry, led by Kathy Sedlacek, where knitters visit and work on prayer shawls, which are distributed far and wide to people in need of prayer and/or healing. Open to all skill levels. And if you don't know how to knit, they will teach you!!

**Wednesday night Pastor's Bible Study - 6:30 pm**

Would you enjoy conversing with the Pastor about insights, questions, and thoughts coming from the Sunday's sermon? Join us on Wednesday nights for dialogue and conversation about the Scripture passages from the previous week's sermon and worship. Led by Pastor Penny. Each week stands alone so come every Wednesday or once in a while...

## **TRUNK-OR-TREAT A GREAT SUCCESS!!**

Thank you to everyone who worked so hard on our wonderful Trunk-or-Treat event! We had around 200 people working, playing, eating, visiting, and trunk-or-treating! It was a great community event and it helped us meet our neighbors, demonstrate the amazing and sufficient grace of God in all the "free" goodies, and build relationship with our friends and neighbors! And that's what every church and every follower of Jesus Christ is called to do: love God and love neighbor! Well done, New Bethel UMC! Well done!!

## **THANK YOU'S**

Dear New Bethel UMC family: I am so very grateful for your amazing and generous expressions of appreciation for my ministry, during the month of October! From the showering of Starbucks cards and the inspiring note cards, to the wonderful lunches and visits, you have blessed and encouraged my heart and soul (and quenched my coffee thirst)! Thank you for your kindness, friendship, and support of my leadership and ministry at New Bethel UMC. And if I haven't told you lately, I feel honored and blessed to be here! You are awesome! And I love you.

- Pastor Penny Barber

**Thank you, Ken and Nancy Gaines, for transporting 25 flood buckets to the Midwest Distribution Center in Springfield, IL.**

Thank you to my New Bethel family for the honor you showed me with the Nancy Compton Servant Leadership Award. I have been blessed to call this church mine, and the people of it my family, for almost 28 years now. I remember the first day Larry and I visited, how we were greeted and made welcome. Fresh bread and a visit from Bob and Bev Jones followed the next day, and by the next Sunday we were on committees and on our way! I will continue to do all I can to make New Bethel home for all of us.

With love, Linda Lawhead

## CHILDREN and YOUTH SUNDAY SCHOOL

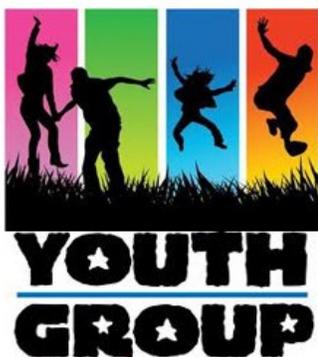
Pre-school/Elementary Sunday School will continue with Dig In: Digging Into the Life of Jesus leads kids in walking in Jesus' footsteps from birth to resurrection to ascension. Kids don't just learn about the historical Jesus; they get to know him personally. They'll discover that Jesus is a real person—a real friend—who makes a difference in their lives today. This class is taught by Jenny Mulvihill and Nancy Slater.

Children's Worship activity bags are available during each service for your little ones. They are welcome to grab one out of the tub and take back to their pews after the Children's sermon.

Middle School SS Class is discovering the Case for Christ. This class is led by Dennis Wilson and Andrew Adams.

High School SS Class continues to do the NOOMA videos. This class is led by Cody Azotea and Sheina Franco.

**Be sure to see information about the Children's Christmas Program on page 5!**



### MIDDLE SCHOOL & SENIOR HIGH YOUTH

#### Wednesdays:

We will meet for Bible study each week, except for 11/22 (Thanksgiving week).

**Saturday, November 4:** The church is hosting the Soup and Bread dinner. Everyone is needed to make this a successful event, so sign up to work a shift and/or donate soups, breads, and desserts. "Points" will be credited to your Youth Account for working a shift.

**Sunday, November 12:** Operation Christmas Child boxes will be blessed to send. If you are filling a box, be sure to bring it on or before this day.

**Saturday - Sunday, Nov. 18-19: Senior High/College retreat to Little Grassy Camp**  
Adult drivers/chaperones are needed. Permission and payment are due on November 5.

#### High School Seniors!

There are scholarships available towards your college expenses!  
Al Wentz New Bethel United Methodist Church Scholarship— check with the Guidance Office at EHS for paperwork and deadlines.

General Board of Higher Education and Ministry  
United Methodist Church  
Offers loans and scholarships through our church.  
<https://www.gbhem.org/loans-and-scholarships>



**BIRTHDAYS ...**

- November 1- Taylor Frick
- November 3- Robert Kelsey, John Kutz
- November 5- Linda Lawhead, Jo Meikamp
- November 8- Nancy Slater
- November 10- Mike Meikamp,  
Jon Sanfilippo, Kathy Witzke
- November 13- Kristen Azotea
- November 14- Madelyn Foster
- November 15- John Meckel
- November 17- Cody Azotea
- November 25- Melissa Spencer
- November 27- Shannon Meckel
- November 29- James Nuoffer

**Quote of the month:**

*November is the month to remind us to be thankful for the many positive things happening in our lives.*

Coming in December!  
**Christmas Eve Candlelight Services**  
**Sunday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**  
**4:30pm and 11:00pm**  
 Communion will be served  
 at both services

**RECURRING EVENTS AT NEW BETHEL...**

**SUNDAYS:**

- Worship. 8:15 & 10:45 AM
- Nursery. 8:00 AM-Noon
- Sunday School. 9:30 AM

**SUNDAY ADULT BIBLE STUDIES—SUNDAYS 9:30 AM:**

- Room 202—Women of Faith Class on *Jesus Calling*
- Room 203 - *Embracing Grace*
- Room 204 - *Son Catchers*, led by Norma Abram

**SHORT-TERM CLASSES**

- Mere Christianity*, led by Pastor Penny
- Visiting the Upper Room*, led by Jim & Kathy Jeffries

**WEEKLY:**

**Tuesday Evening**

**Quilters.** Tuesdays 9:15 AM. Fellowship Hall. All are welcome.

**Wednesday Evening**

- Middle & Senior High School.** Lively learning and fun with Ms. Judy Lee. 6-7:30 PM, Room 103/104.
- Bible Study, Prayer Shawl Ministry.** 6:30pm
- Chancel Choir.** Practice weekly at 7:30pm

**Thursday Evening**

- Bell Choir.** 1st and 3rd Thursdays at 6pm
- Praise Band Practice—**check with Jake Hoult

**MONTHLY:**

- United Methodist Men.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays, 8 AM breakfast and meeting
- United Methodist Women.** 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturdays, 9:30 AM

# November 2017

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

			1	2	3	4
			Youth Group- 6pm Bible Study and Groups- 6:30pm Choir- 7:30pm	Disciple 1- 6pm Bell Choir- 6pm Praise Band- 7pm		<b>Soup &amp; Bread, Country Market</b>
<b>5</b> <b>All Saints Sunday</b>  Disciple 2- 1:30pm	<b>6</b> AA Bible Study - 6pm	<b>7</b> Quilters - 9:15am	<b>1</b> Youth Group - 6pm Bible Study and Groups- 6:30pm Choir- 7:30pm Choir	<b>9</b> Disciple 1- 6pm Praise Band- 7pm	<b>10</b> <b>Veterans' Day</b>  Office Closed	<b>11</b> UMM-8am UMW- 9am
<b>12</b> <b>Shoeboxes Dedication</b>  Disciple 2- 1:30pm	<b>13</b> AA Bible Study - 6pm	<b>14</b> Quilters - 9:15am  Finance Committee - 6:30pm	<b>15</b> Youth Group - 6pm Bible Study and Groups- 6:30pm Choir- 7:30pm	<b>16</b> Disciple 1- 6pm Bell Choir- 6pm Praise Band- 7pm	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>19</b>  Disciple 2- 1:30pm	<b>20</b> AA Bible Study - 6pm	<b>21</b> Quilters - 9:15am  Admin. Council- 6:30pm	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>  <b>Thanksgiving Day</b>  Office Closed	<b>24</b>  Office Closed	<b>25</b>
<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> AA Bible Study - 6pm	<b>28</b> Quilters - 9:15am	<b>29</b> Potluck Dinner- 5:30 Hanging of the Greens- 6:30pm- Choir- 7:30pm	<b>30</b> Disciple 1- 6pm Praise Band- 7pm	Dec 1	Dec 2  <b>Charge Conference</b> @ First UMC East Alton- 11am