



Volume 13 Number 11 December 2023

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*Heard through...*

WILDWOOD CHURCH

*Come Home to Bethel - Since 1858*

## The OPEN DOOR



17500 Manchester Road, Wildwood, Missouri 63038

[www.bethelwildwood.org](http://www.bethelwildwood.org) Phone: (636) 458-2255

### BETHEL FRIENDS GATHER AT BONFIRE TO 'CAST FEARS INTO THE FIRE'

The age-old custom of gathering around a bonfire with friends was held at Bethel Wildwood Church in November. Everyone was invited to write their fears and concerns on a scrap of paper and then to cast those concerns into the fire. This symbolizes the act of turning your troubles over to God. The evening was made fun with a dinner of hot dogs and Ray Daub's homemade chili. A variety of delicious cookies and other fall favorite desserts were available too. Thanks to Gary and Nina Hayes for preparing the bonfire, and to everyone who brought treats. Bethel will hold another bonfire in a few months so watch for a notice in the Open Door.



## GERMAN STUDENTS VISIT ST. LOUIS & LEARN THE VALUE OF VOLUNTEERING



Bethel member Kim Hotze was recognized recently for a special exchange student project she hosted that brought 15 high school students from Germany to the United States.

Kim retired this past school year from the Rockwood School District. For 31 years she was known as the German teacher at Marquette High School. She also served as the school's community service instructor.

Kim had been an exchange student herself as a teenager and she was eager to work with the Youth for Understanding for this special project. The German students were from Thuringia, a state in central Germany. They have a 2-week fall break in their school schedule which made the trip possible. The kids had two adult chaperones as well.

Not only did Kim work with the YFU to find host families, she also coordinated the service projects, arranged all the transportation, and even helped the students to improve their English language skills. Projects included a trip to the Five Acres Animal Shelter where they crafted snuffle mats and chew toys for the animals. They also visited Johnson's Shut-Ins and Elephant Rocks state parks where they conducted a clean-up project. Kim said they enjoyed seeing the unique areas, and even were able to get in a swim. A 2-day project took the crew to Arlington UMC in Bridgeton to work with the Youth Volunteer Corps. Their task was to build children's beds for the Sleep in Heavenly Peace project. They completed 24 beds.



Kim was thankful for assistance from Steven Rutherford for helping to get the project started. She also thanked Schnucks at Clarkson and Clayton Roads who provided a home base for the kids to gather each day.

Kim is hopeful that the German students will return home and share their experiences of doing volunteer work. She also is encouraged that this type of exchange can be repeated next fall.

## BETHEL PLANS TO CELEBRATE THE HOLY CHRISTMAS SEASON

The Christmas Season is upon us...let the rush begin! Just remember to spend time appreciating the real reason for the season.

Bethel will open our Christmas season by our traditional Hanging of the Greens. This will be held after church service on Sunday, Nov. 26. You can bring dishes for a potluck lunch and then help to hang boughs of greenery and wreaths in the sanctuary. The annual Cookie Festival and Craft Boutique will be Saturday, Dec. 2, in Fellowship Hall. The Bethel Crafters will open their Christmas Boutique in the Crafters Cottage as well, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. On Sunday, Dec. 10, our Music Team will present a Christmas play "The Innkeeper's Daughter." It will be an audience participation play with several Christmas carols. Christmas Day is on a Monday, so Bethel will have church service on the morning of Christmas Eve, Dec. 24. And, then we will also have our traditional Christmas Eve service on Sunday afternoon, 4 p.m. Christmas Day will be Monday, Dec. 25. Bethel wishes everyone a Blessed Merry Christmas.

### HANGING OF THE GREENS!

We would love to have you join us as we adorn our historic sanctuary in preparation for Advent and Christmas Sunday, Nov. 26 @ noon! Please bring a dish to share for lunch after morning worship service then join us in the sanctuary to share stories of the history behind traditions, listen to scripture readings, sing Christmas carols, help hang the sanctuary greens and enjoy Plum Pudding cake!

### YOU HAD BETTER WATCH OUT... DON'T MISS THE COOKIE FESTIVAL!

Christmas is the merriest time of year, we probably all agree. So don't miss the merry time at Bethel's Annual Christmas Cookie Festival and Craft Boutique Saturday, Dec. 2. It will be open from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., and will feature a wide variety of home baked cookies, candy and cakes. There will be fudge and the popular buckeyes. There will also be a section of sugar-free items as well. Cookies will be sold in pre-packaged bags for \$3 each. You will want to come early for best selection.

The Bethel Crafters will open their doors at the completely renovated Craft Cottage, and they will have new Christmas décor just right for your home and/or for gifts. So, get your holiday shopping started, and remember friends and relatives who would like to have an early sampling of Christmas cookies.

Diane Durbin and Diane Smith open the door of the Crafter's Cottage to welcome shoppers for the Bethel Crafters Boutique, to be open Saturday, Dec. 2, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Be sure to visit the Crafter's Cottage, either before or after making your way through the Cookie Festival in Fellowship Hall.



## MISSION GATE CHRISTMAS ANGEL TREE

Each year, Bethel has been a faithful partner with the Mission Gate Prison Ministry to provide Christmas gifts for children of those who are incarcerated. All of the gifts, collected from various churches and other donors, are given to the children in a joyous music-filled Christmas party.



**Don & Diana Walsh have spear-headed the Mission Gate Christmas Angel Tree project for several years, and they have seen many positive results from this ministry.**

The Angel Tree is in the Fellowship Hall. Hanging on the tree are silhouettes of either a boy or girl, along with their age, so that you can determine what kind of gifts they would appreciate. The fun thing is that if your kids or grandkids are now aged out of such fun Christmas gifts as a doll or a toy truck, this is an opportunity to supply that toy for a young child. It is suggested that each child should have 3 gifts, wrapped in Christmas wrap. When you take an “angel” tag from the tree, be sure to label your 3 gifts appropriately and bring them back to Bethel by Sunday, Dec. 17. Please write your name on the list and then check off your space when you have completed your project of bringing the gifts. You also have the option to purchase a gift card rather than shopping for gifts. If so, please give those gift cards to Ginger in the office.

Mission Gate has an active one-year Aftercare Program in which they work with folks who have been released from prison, to try to get them on the right path in their lives. In the past, statistics showed that 8 out of 10 of these folks returned to a life of crime after being released. The Mission Gate Program has been credited with helping to reverse that trend so that 8 out of 10 never return to crime. Many thanks to all who contribute to the Angel Tree.

## THE CHURCH BELL INVITES ALL TO COME FOR WORSHIP

Bethel Wildwood Church always welcomes its people to church on Sunday morning with the ringing of the church bell.

This requires a steady pull on the rope, and one Sunday morning recently, there were three little helpers ready to do the job.

Harvey, Henry and Annabelle Dooley, grandchildren of Frederick and Carla DeSalme, accomplished this with enthusiasm.

**Thanks, grandkids!**



**2023 STAFF LOVE OFFERING**

*Dear Bethel Family:*

*Each year at this time we express our love and appreciation in different ways to those around us who mean so much to us and have helped us throughout the year. This includes our church family.*

*We would like to take this opportunity to ask you to join us in expressing our appreciation, thanks and love to our staff members by giving an extra donation to the STAFF LOVE OFFERING. This monetary gift will be divided among the staff and will be Bethel Family's year-end gift to them in honor of the birth of Christ.*

*Please have your love offering in by **December 17**. Please make sure you indicate on your check's memo line or on the cash envelope that the donation is for the "**Staff Love Offering**". Thank you so much and have a blessed Christmas season!*

*Merry CHRISTmas with love from:  
The Pastor– Governing Board@ Bethel Wildwood Church*

**FAITH IN ACTION**

**CIRCLE OF CONCERN'S CHRISTMAS ADOPTION PROGRAM**

Circle of Concern's Christmas Adoption Program is in need of \$50 gift cards to purchase gifts.

*Let's help them reach their goal by giving gift cards for 30 of their 2,400 clients (\$1,500 total). Any amount will help. Please note your checks with Circle of Concern on the memo line when making donations. Thanks for your help!*



**Diane D,**

*Thank you for donating postage stamps.— Bethel Wildwood Church*

**Bethel members,**

*Thanks to all of those who helped in accomplishing the renovations at the parsonage. We are happy to be at what is now known as Bethel’s Craft Cottage. Our thanks for everyone’s continuing support. The Cottage is open after church on Sundays and from 9am-noon on Thursdays. Contact Diane or Ruth Anne for a showing when you need a gift for any occasion. — Bethel Crafters*

**Jeff & Bethel family,**

*We enjoy your service so much!—Bob & Willeyne B*

**Worship leaders, ushers, counters, and other volunteers,**

*Thanks for sharing your time and talents with Bethel throughout the year! We appreciate all you do to help us share the word of God and help others in our community. —Bethel Wildwood Church*

### OPEN Praise Team

Anyone with singing or instrumental musical talents interested in helping the praise team please get in contact with Shirley Martka ASAP.

### Giving

In an effort to make you aware of our ongoing income and expenses Bert, our treasurer, has calculated our monthly expenses and we have provided a total of our offerings for the given month as follows:

Total estimated monthly expenses:	\$12,600
Total offerings received as of 11/26/23:	\$ 9,479

### Circle of Concern is currently in need of the following items:

healthy snacks, soup, cereal, oatmeal, canned beef/chicken, beef stew, canned fruit, condiments, boxed potatoes, rice, baking items, flushable wipes, body wash, cotton swabs, hygiene products, cleaning products, dry pet food & litter

Please leave non-perishable food donations in the shopping cart next to the elevator. Thanks for your donations!

## On The Calendar @ Bethel

**Bethel Fitness**—Mondays & Thursdays @ 9am

**Music Ministry Practice**—Tuesdays @ 3pm

**Crafters & Prayer Shawl Warriors**—Thursdays @ 9:30am

**Annual Cookie Festival & Craft Boutique**—Saturday, Dec. 2 @ 9-2pm

**Communion**—Sunday, Dec. 3 @ 10am

**Board Meeting**—Tuesday, Dec. 5 @ 7pm

**Listening For God’s Voice (cemetery walk)**—Saturday, Dec. 9

**Christian Perspectives Class**—Sunday, Dec. 10 @ 9am

**Juliets’ Luncheon**—Tuesday, Dec. 12 - Big Chiefs @ 11:30

**Christian Perspectives Class**—Sunday, Dec. 17 @ 9am

**Sunday Service**—Sunday, Dec. 24 @ 10am

**Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**—Sunday, Dec. 24 @ 4pm

### Fellowship Time

Join us for coffee in fellowship hall after worship every Sunday. All are welcome.

### Nursery

Childcare provided during Sunday service.

**We are blessed to have a good number of gifted lay leaders willing to help make our Zoom service a success.**

### Our schedule for December is as follows...

<u>Date</u>	<u>Devotion</u>	<u>Music</u>	<u>Lead</u>	<u>Prayer</u>	<u>ZOOM</u>	<u>PPT</u>
12/3	PJeff	Shirley	Diana	PJeff	TBD	TBD
12/10	PJeff	Shirley	Pat	PJeff	TBD	TBD
12/17	PJeff	Shirley	Louella	PJeff	TBD	TBD
12/24	PJeff	Shirley	Don	PJeff	TBD	TBD
12/31	PJeff	Shirley	Barb	PJeff	TBD	TBD

The ZOOM & PPT Teams arrange their own schedules.

### Contribution Recordkeeping Schedule

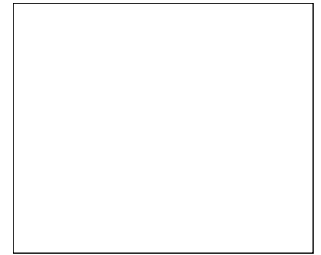
	Sheila	RuthAnne/Bert	Bert	Bert	Bert
<b>December</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>

### Counters Schedule

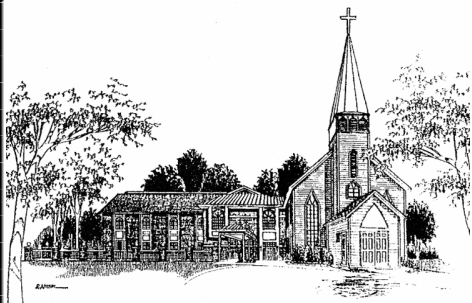
	Dale/Sheila	RuthAnne/Bert	RuthAnne/Suzi	Bert/Debbie	Bert
<b>Dec.</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>31</b>



Bethel Wildwood Church  
17500 Manchester Road  
Wildwood, MO 63038-1907



**December 2023  
News!**



## **Bethel Wildwood Church**

*Love God,  
Love Others,  
Serve All!*

***Please Join Us Sunday For Service***

Service will be **LIVE** in the sanctuary @ **10 a.m.**  
or you can use one of the following:

**Church webpage:** [www.bethelwildwood.org](http://www.bethelwildwood.org)

**Facebook:** <https://www.facebook.com/BethelWildwoodChurch/> "Like Us" on Facebook

**YouTube:** <https://www.youtube.com/@BethelWildwoodChurch>

**Zoom:** Please contact the church office at 636-458-2255 to receive the link.